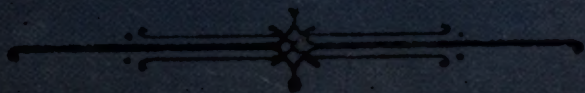


# PARAGUAY

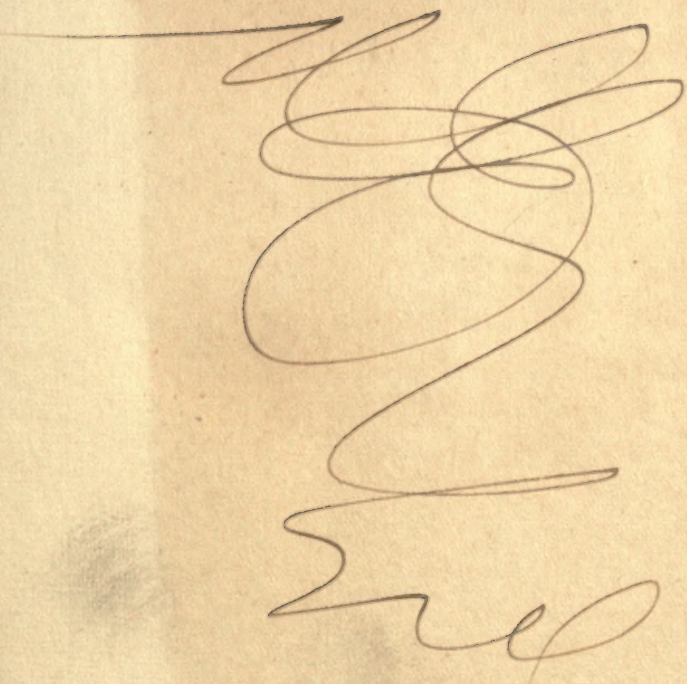
IT'S PEOPLE  
CUSTOMS AND  
COMMERCE





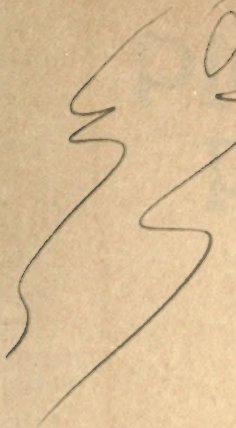
5157/631

m.iz









Manuel L. Sosa

PICTURESQUE  
PARAGUAY



# PICTURESQUE PARAGUAY

SPORT  
PIONEERING  
TRAVEL

## A LAND OF PROMISE

STOCK-RAISING, PLANTATION INDUSTRIES  
FOREST PRODUCTS, COMMERCIAL POSSIBILITIES

BY  
ALEXANDER K. MACDONALD

London

CHARLES H. KELLY

25-35 CITY ROAD, AND 26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

FIRST EDITION . . . . . 1911



## Preface

THERE is no apology necessary in bringing out a book of this class ; for the simple reason that no other work of the kind has so far been published in the English language. The average Briton really knows a great deal more of the heart of Africa than the untrodden wilds of Central South America. Nevertheless, it is a fact that a considerable part of Paraguay is owned by British capitalists, some of whose enormous estates amount to hundreds of square leagues, as yet undeveloped, consisting of magnificent forests or virgin prairie. A British railway company is also extending its operations and constructing new branches connecting with Argentine and Brazilian lines, so that people are now able to travel by rail from Buenos Ayres to Paraguay, and from thence later on to the Atlantic Coast and Rio Janeiro, enjoying in comfort the fine scenery of the overland journey. The beauties of the Iguassu Falls, and the grandeur of the Guayra—the Niagara of South America—are already attracting a number of tourists. Some hundreds of British and German settlers are scattered over the country ; mostly doing fairly well—and hoping to do very much

better in the near future. The opening of through railway traffic from Asuncion to Buenos Ayres will render possible the development of an enormous trade in bananas, oranges, and other tropical fruits for export to the great cities of the South. And it is only reasonable to suppose that the fruit industry will open up untold possibilities of wealth—as a similar trade has already done for the West Indies and Central America ; and a big thing might easily be done by companies formed for the purpose of laying out plantations for occupation by incoming planters, who might be well-established from the start without the risk of making mistakes incidental to inexperienced pioneering in a forest country.

The author has purposely departed from time-honoured traditions, and publishes a series of loosely connected sketches, covering a period of fifteen years' sport and pioneering in Paraguay. Dry statistics, which no one cares to read, are mostly omitted ; and all essential facts are wrapped up incidentally with other matter more interesting to the casual reader. So, in imagination, we will sail away to a land of sunshine and butterflies, where there are neither unemployed nor 'Suffragettes,' nor very rich nor extremely poor ; where the conventionalities of life don't count for much, and where every man may have bread-and-butter and a cottage of his own—if he likes



to work for it. In all thickly populated countries, this happy state of affairs is only possible to the favoured few ; and the result has been a social problem where a submerged tenth tends to merge into a submerged fifth, unless something is done to mitigate the evils of over-crowding in European countries. The far-fetched theories of some philosophers that war, famine, and pestilence are really blessings in disguise, predestined for the purpose of eliminating the weaker elements of society, and bringing about the survival of the fittest, are absurd in the extreme to any one who has seen the waste places of the earth only awaiting the toil of the husbandman to make it productive of all the necessities for human life. The obvious remedy for the man and woman who seem to have no place in life in their own country is to decentralize, and carve out homes for themselves in one of the many lands across the seas, where there is light and life and room for all.

In Paraguay there is, so far, no competition to face. The veriest novice is certain of making at least a living, if he is really satisfied to materialize the simple life in his own person, while the skilled agriculturalist and stock-breeder may find practically unlimited scope for their capital and energy. The possibilities of life in the Republic may be gauged by the career of Dr. William Stewart, an octogenarian—a veritable

patriarch in his adopted country—owning broad lands, flocks and herds without number, passing his days in peace and happiness in his beautiful villa in the outskirts of Asuncion. After thirty-five years in the country, his only complaint appears to be that if he had not been exceptionally unfortunate he might have possessed the whole territory. Hale and active—in spite of his years—the genial doctor appears to have discovered the secret of eternal youth. In his younger days, Dr. Stewart passed an adventurous career in the Crimea, and during the war of the ‘Triple Alliance’ against Paraguay.

A small portion of the subject-matter of this book has already been published in the columns of the Buenos Ayres *Standard*, the leading English newspaper in the River Plate.

As the country is quite unknown, I am giving a list of the most important commercial houses for the convenience of British manufacturers and tradespeople, who might easily push business in that part of the world, as they have already done in the Argentine Republic.

The reader will find in Chapters XXIV. and XXIX. original information on tropical diseases—and the preservation of health in hot countries—which will make the book invaluable to all residents of the tropics, sub-tropics, and the warmer parts of the



North and South Temperate Zones. It will be equally serviceable to doctors practising their profession in those regions. The author also gives a clear and distinct refutation of the vulgar error that the white man can neither work in the open air nor transmit his energy to a robust posterity in the tropics.

Up to the date of publication of this work, no reliable survey of the territory has yet been made. Existing maps are not worth the paper they are printed upon, often depicting imaginary ranges of mountains and large bodies of water where none exist in reality, and vice versa. The writer makes no pretence to the use of classic language or honeyed phrases; but the reader who cares to follow in his footsteps will admit—at least—that he does know his Paraguay from the very realistic point of view of the man who has lived the life until the crudities of his first ideas had been ground down very fine by the mill of personal experience.

It is hoped that, within its limitations, *Picturesque Paraguay* will become a handbook of the tropics through the very practical nature of much out-of-the-way information it furnishes vitally affecting the conditions of life in the hitherto unconquered equatorial regions of the earth.

ALEX. K. MACDONALD.

*London, October 1st, 1911.*

## PARAGUAYAN CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION, ASUNCION

---

As may be seen by the photo, the Paraguayan Central Railway Station in the capital is a very handsome building, specially interesting as being the administrative offices of the oldest railway enterprise in South America. This company, in combination with the North East Argentine and Entre Rios Railways, are now running a through passenger and freight service to Buenos Ayres, and vice versa. The journey at present occupies three days, but will be shortened to forty-eight hours when the new ferry service is completed on the Alto Parana, about the end of the present year. In the meantime passengers must stop over a night at either Villa Encarnacion or Posadas, from whence, if they so desire, it is an easy matter to pay a flying visit by steamer to the far-famed Iguazu Falls, before resuming their voyage by 'terra firma.' In this manner the overland trip is very much less monotonous than the corresponding voyage by steamer, as one may see from the train the enormous herds of cattle and horses for which Corrientes and Entre Rios are famous, as also the prairies and primeval forests of Central Paraguay, the rolling downs of Southern Misiones and Northern Corrientes, and the wooded banks of the silvery Uruguay, celebrated as being the Rhine of South America. Travellers may with advantage break their journey at Concordia or Santa Tome, and rest for a few days to see something of the country. At Buenos Ayres information may be obtained at the local offices of the Entre Rios Railway Company.







# Contents

| CHAPTER   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. THE VOYAGE OUT : THE CALL OF THE SEA . . . . .                               | 23   |
| II. A GLIMPSE AT BUENOS AYRES . . . . .   | 33   |
| III. THE RIO PARANA . . . . .   | 40   |
| IV. THE RIO PARAGUAY . . . . .  | 54   |
| V. THE HEAD WATERS OF THE RIVER PLATE . . . . .                                 | 64   |
| VI. ASUNCION DEL PARAGUAY . . . . .   | 76   |
| VII. RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. I . . . . .                                      | 91   |
| VIII. " " " II . . . . .  | 109  |
| IX. " " " III . . . . .   | 122  |
| X. " " " IV . . . . .   | 132  |
| XI. " " " V . . . . .   | 143  |
| XII. " " " VI . . . . .   | 152  |
| XIII. " " " VII . . . . .   | 160  |
| XIV. A SOUTH AMERICAN ARCADIA . . . . .   | 172  |
| XV. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS . . . . .   | 186  |
| XVI. FOREST PRODUCTS . . . . .  | 204  |
| XVII. AGRICULTURE AND CATTLE-RAISING . . . . .                                  | 217  |
| XVIII. A MODERN 'MAYFLOWER' EPISODE : AN<br>ATTEMPT TO REALIZE UTOPIA . . . . . | 238  |
| XIX. WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR BOYS? . . . . .                                  | 253  |
| XX. A WEEK IN THE WOODS . . . . .   | 269  |
| XXI. FRUIT RANCHING . . . . .   | 282  |
| XXII. SPORT IN CENTRAL SOUTH AMERICA. . . . .                                   | 294  |
| XXIII. PROPOSED SOUTH AMERICAN CHARTERED COM-<br>PANY . . . . .                 | 306  |

| CHAPTER  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| XXIV. HEALTH NOTES FOR HOT COUNTRIES . . .   | 320  |
| XXV. A NEW PLANTATION INDUSTRY . . .   | 340  |
| XXVI. A ROMANCE OF JESUIT MISSION WORK: AN<br>EXPERIMENT IN STATE SOCIALISM AND<br>SOCIAL REFORM . . . . . | 352  |
| XXVII. A SOUTH AMERICAN REVOLUTION . . .   | 377  |
| XXVIII. BACKWOODS LIFE . . . . .   | 388  |
| XXIX. THE TROPICS OR TEMPERATE ZONES . . .   | 405  |
| XXX. HISTORICAL NOTES . . . . .  | 421  |
| XXXI. ACTUALITIES AND POSSIBILITIES OF COMMERCE .  | 436  |
| XXXII. GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES . . . . .   | 446  |
| XXXIII. GOVERNMENT COLONIES . . . . .  | 458  |
| XXXIV. UNKNOWN ANIMALS IN PARAGUAY AND THE CHACO   | 474  |
| XXXV. THE VERY LATEST . . . . .  | 486  |
| APPENDIX . . . . .   | 499  |



# List of Illustrations

## With Pictorial Notes

|  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| PARAGUAYAN CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION, ASUNCION . . . . .               | II   |
| FAIR DAUGHTERS OF THE SOUTH . . . . .                                | 21   |
| NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE, PIRAPO . . . . .                                 | 52   |
| RIVER SCENE, CHACO SIDE . . . . .                                    | 62   |
| GOVERNMENT HOUSE, ASUNCION . . . . .                                 | 74   |
| THE CATHEDRAL, VILLA RICA . . . . .                                  | 107  |
| ON TREK . . . . .  | 120  |
| A FOREST 'PICADA' . . . . .  | 130  |
| RAFT ON THE TEBICUARY-MI. . . . .                                    | 141  |
| DOM MIGUEL FARIA, A HERO OF THE WAR . . . . .                        | 150  |
| WAITING AT THE FERRY . . . . .                                       | 170  |
| THE BANCO AGRICOLA, ASUNCION . . . . .                               | 184  |
| CEDAR LOGS FLOATING BY THE RAILWAY BRIDGE, TEBICUARY-GUAZU . . . . . | 202  |
| CATTLE-BRANDING UPON AN ESTANCIA . . . . .                           | 215  |
| A CONTRAST IN AGRICULTURAL METHODS . . . . .                         | 236  |
| A VILLAGE BELLE . . . . .  | 267  |
| BANANA PLANTATION—EXTERIOR . . . . .                                 | 280  |
| A FRUIT RANCH, VILLA RICA . . . . .                                  | 292  |
| BANANA PLANTATION—INTERIOR . . . . .                                 | 304  |
| THE GUAYRA FALLS . . . . .   | 318  |
| A RIACHO IN THE CHACO . . . . .                                      | 338  |
| OLD JESUIT CHURCH, CANGO. . . . .                                    | 350  |
| PARAGUAYAN ARTILLERY . . . . .                                       | 375  |
| EAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD . . . . .                                 | 403  |
| A MILKMAID IN THE TROPICS . . . . .                                  | 419  |
| A RAILWAY IN THE MAKING . . . . .                                    | 434  |
| SETTLER'S COTTAGE . . . . .  | 456  |
| A PLANTATION OF SUGAR-CANE . . . . .                                 | 472  |
| CENTRAL OFFICES OF THE 'INDUSTRIAL PARAGUAYA' . . . . .              | 484  |

---

|  |    |
|--|----|
| ONE OF THE SEVEN FALLS OF THE IGUAZU . . . . .               | 32 |
| GRAN HOTEL DEL PARAGUAY, VILLA EGUSQUIZA, ASUNCION . . . . . | 35 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| PLAZA CONSTITUCION, ASUNCION . . . . .   | 41  |
| RIVER SCENE, CORRIENTES . . . . .  | 47  |
| COUNTING-HOUSE OF KRAUCH AND CO., IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS,<br>ASUNCION . . . . .                         | 57  |
| THE ALTO-PARANA . . . . .  | 67  |
| BRITISH CONSULATE, ASUNCION . . . . .  | 79  |
| LADIES IN ASUNCION . . . . .   | 85  |
| RIVER STEAMER AT THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, ASUNCION . . . . .  | 90  |
| MARKET-PLACE, ASUNCION . . . . .   | 95  |
| STREET IN ASUNCION . . . . .   | 135 |
| COUNCIL CHAMBER, BANCO AGRICOLA, ASUNCION . . . . .  | 177 |
| A COUNTRY STORE . . . . .  | 193 |
| GATHERING PARAGUAYAN TEA . . . . .   | 207 |
| SOUTH AMERICAN COWBOY . . . . .  | 225 |
| CALLE PALMAS, ASUNCION . . . . .   | 243 |
| BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, RIO PIRAPO . . . . .  | 252 |
| TIMBER-CARTS—ALL WOOD WHEELS . . . . .   | 257 |
| CRAMER AND WEYER, MERCHANTS, ASUNCION . . . . .  | 262 |
| POLICE MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE, CARAPEGUA . . . . .  | 273 |
| A WHOLESALE WAREHOUSE: BRUN AND CO., IMPORTERS AND EX-<br>PORTERS, ASUNCION . . . . .                    | 285 |
| LOCAL ENTERPRISE: PABLO MEILICKE'S LEATHER AND SADDLERY<br>WAREHOUSE, ASUNCION . . . . .                 | 311 |
| A PUBLIC SQUARE, ASUNCION . . . . .  | 327 |
| URRUTIA, UGARTE, AND CO., IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION . . . . .                                    | 343 |
| A BACKWATER ON THE RIO PARAGUAY . . . . .  | 361 |
| COLONEL ALBINO JARA . . . . .  | 381 |
| COOKING UPON A RAFT . . . . .  | 389 |
| INTERIOR OF A WAREHOUSE: CENSI AND PIROTTA, IMPORTERS AND<br>EXPORTERS, ASUNCION . . . . .               | 395 |
| GROUP OF PARAGUAYAN LADIES, CARAPEGUA . . . . .  | 411 |
| LAPIERRE AND CO., GENERAL MERCHANTS AND CIGAR AND TOBACCO<br>EXPORTERS, ASUNCION . . . . .               | 425 |
| PEREZ AND SANJURJO, IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION . . . . .  | 441 |
| PALM FOREST IN THE CHACO . . . . .   | 449 |
| OTTO ZINNERT'S GUNSHOP, ASUNCION . . . . .   | 463 |
| CABRERA, BENITEZ, AND CO., GENERAL IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS,<br>VILLA CONCEPCION, ALTO-PARAGUAY . . . . . | 477 |
| BANCO MERCANTIL DEL PARAGUAY, ASUNCION . . . . .   | 493 |



## Introduction

THE eyes of the world to-day are upon South America. After centuries of neglect she is at last beginning to take her proper place as the natural outlet for the seething populations of the old world. It comes as a revelation to most English people that a cosmopolitan population in the Argentine is surely building up one of the greatest industrial nations of modern times. Taking up a local newspaper—the *Standard*—at random, I find on one page detailed notices of twenty-three different lines of steamships trading out to Buenos Ayres. This fact speaks for itself. If the old picturesque pioneering element has vanished in North America, or changed its type, it is interesting to note that, in the South—as far as the white man is concerned—the life has hardly yet begun. Primaeval forests, untouched by the woodman's axe, still cover the greatest area. Even in the most populous districts of Central South America the woods have been merely fringed for a couple of hundred yards or so with tiny, microscopic clearings, to the extent of a few acres for each homestead. The prairies also, although pretty well stocked in the River Plate Republics, in many

parts are the haunt of the red deer, the ostrich, and guanaco. The wild Indian, in all his primitive simplicity, roams these pathless solitudes, mostly in happy ignorance of the pale-face and fire-water. To the credit of the dominant race, it must be said that large populations have fairly assimilated our European civilization. And the process is still going on. In the case of the peasantry there has been no appreciable admixture of foreign blood. Of all these countries, perhaps the little Republic of Paraguay is the most interesting, no less for its romantic and pathetic history than for the beauties of its scenery and the simple, 'lotus-eating' lives of the people. Built up by the untiring energy of the Jesuits and the paternal—if despotic—rule of Drs. Francia and Lopez, it was almost depopulated in the war of the 'Triple Alliance,' owing to the folly and ambition of the younger Lopez. At the conclusion of the war there only remained old men and young boys unfit for military service. Man-eating jaguars became so bold that they even came into the streets at night, seeking their human prey in the very towns.

In the way of scenery, the long vistas of silver and green, the feathery bamboo and waving palm, the lazy alligator, sleeping in the sun, and the rapid-flowing river, form a picture essentially tropical and fair to look upon. But the charm of the rivers—in

the summer at least—is qualified by the presence of the mosquito and sand-fly. The Alto-Parana has its islands of floating vegetation like the upper course of the White Nile, and affords the traveller a continuous panorama of fine forest scenery and waterfalls unsurpassed in its way in either the old world or the new. In this hitherto undeveloped territory the man who wants to do things will find unlimited scope for his intelligence and energies, while the man who wants to do nothing may swing his hammock in the shade of a spreading tree and suck oranges until the crack of doom.

In the way of business possibilities, the fact that over £870,000,000 of British capital is already invested in South American countries speaks for itself: this being the value of the securities quoted on the London Stock Exchange, irrespective of the private wealth of the hundred thousand British scattered over the length and breadth of the sub-continent, many of whom rival the multi-millionaires of the old world in the extent and productiveness of the properties they have acquired in the land of their adoption.

## FAIR DAUGHTERS OF THE SOUTH

(See also pp. 85, 411).

The ladies of the upper classes in Asuncion are distinguished for their good looks and amiability of character, being sympathetic, kind-hearted, sentimental, vivacious, and good-tempered. Musical—of artistic tastes—and, shall I say it? just a little bit unconventional—as all unspoilt daughters of Eve might be expected to be in a land where the bread-and-butter question does not exist; fond of pretty things, and loving to flit about in the sunshine like humming-birds, rarely taking life seriously or holding a pessimistic view of existence. And, after all, why should they? Mother Grundy is not so very exacting in the sunny clime of Paraguay. If not frequently blessed with classic features, they have always smiling faces, splendid dark eyes, and a wealth of glossy raven tresses, which might grace the head of a queen in fairyland. The blonde type of beauty is the exception rather than the rule; yet one sometimes sees a strange blend of the two extremes, which I have never observed amongst the women of any other part of the world. In early womanhood and up to middle age, they have good figures; erect, well set, a fine bust, and a graceful carriage—except when they make themselves ridiculous by wearing the high-heeled shoes of would-be fashionable ladies of up-to-date society elsewhere. The matrons of a certain age, from lack of out-door exercise, have a decided tendency to develop a substantial homeliness of form, which does not add to their attractiveness, although this physical degeneration is not nearly so marked as amongst the ladies of the same class in the Argentine Republic. Owing to better conditions of life, the Paraguayans of Spanish descent are considerably stronger than their ancestors. Indeed, one often finds men who would be perfect athletes if hardened up by proper training and constant exercise—a fact to be noted by those pessimists who hold that the white race must inevitably degenerate in hot countries.





SEÑORA PASTORA S. DE SOSA ESCALADA.



SEÑORA MARÍA SELVA V. DE BARRIO.



SRA. ASUNCION G. DE GONZALEZ.



# Picturesque Paraguay

## CHAPTER I

### THE VOYAGE OUT : THE CALL OF THE SEA

WHY is it that a prolonged stay in any country, however charming, eventually results in an irresistible longing for a sea voyage? Is it the recurrence of old-time instincts—originating in the misty ages of past geological periods—when all life came out of the sea? This theory accounts for the beneficial effects of bathing in sea water—as also the increased vitality of the salty breezes from over the mighty deep. However it be, any one who has once tasted the charms of a life upon the ocean wave must now and again repeat the experience in order to blot out the worries and boredom of a sedentary existence on shore, and to renew his appreciation of the greater freedom of life upon solid land. Ask the nomad why he loves the desert, or the sailor why he loves the sea. Neither the one nor the other can tell you, unless he happens to have been both nomad and sailor. If so, he will have recognized many things in common. The pure, exhilarating air, undefiled by the exhalations of decaying vegetation,

or the smoke and noxious gases arising from the congestion of humanity in crowded centres of population ; and the measureless expanses of silent wastes and solitude, stretching away to the distant horizon—and beyond. So we go to the sea to inhale new life from the limitless stores of Nature and to dissipate our mental troubles—by cutting away for a time from the old environment—so as to leave room for new thought, new hopes, and new energy to enter into our souls, and to enable us to face the problems of life upon the solid basis of a sound mind in a sound body.

As these lines are being written, I feel the vibration and thumps of the propeller—as it were, the beating of the heart of a great steamer. The motion is restful and soothing, while, in a dreamy kind of way, I hear the swish of the sea upon the vessel's sides, while the waters swirl and boil up in our wake like the flooded torrents of a rock-bound stream rushing away from the fall of a mighty cataract. At night the many-coloured phosphorescent particles held in suspension in sea water—excited by the passing vessel—sparkle and flicker like the jewels of mermaids or other fairy inhabitants of the deep. From the days of Cleopatra in her galley down to the twentieth century, how many millions have gazed for hours spell-bound at these wonderful phenomena of the deep ? But the pen has yet to be forged which can do more than suggest



ideas to those who have been through the experience : just as the faintest whiff of a long-forgotten scent will, in a flash, carry us back to a past environment in an Indian bazaar—or to an Arab divan in Jeddah, or old Cairo. The sea is like a fair woman ; full of moods and endless caprice : sometimes soft and loving, every breath upon your cheek a caress, every ripple upon the surface a smile to gladden the heart of a lover ; often calm and placid, glittering like a silver mirror ; sometimes, alas, expressing storm, and gloom, and restless energy—seeking only to destroy.

Leaving English shores, it is usually a day before we get quite clear of the turbid waters and misty atmosphere of the Northern seas. Then day by day—if the Fates are propitious in crossing the Bay of Biscay—we sail away into warmer waters, where the blue waves ripple and swell and break into foam as they chase each other over the wastes of space. Many outward-bound steamers call at Spanish and Portuguese ports for the convenience of Continental passengers, and there is generally an opportunity to see something of Corunna, Oporto, Lisbon, and other sunny towns on the coast of the Peninsula. In the way of climate and scenery these old-fashioned cities leave little to be desired. Running south, the Trade winds—blowing over tropic seas—are soft and warm, inspiring one with a love of life and hope and energy.

Under these influences people relax unconsciously, and very little things interest grave philosophers. There is decided evidence of rejuvenation. Old people may be seen absorbed in childish games, and stately matrons displaying the agility of girlhood, playing skipping-rope, dancing, and promenading the decks. A grimy old 'tramp' steamer—passing in the distance—is invested with a halo of romance, and gazed at by all hands until it fades away—hull down—on the horizon. A shoal of sportive porpoises, playing the somewhat dangerous game of hide-and-seek in front of the cut-water, or turning somersaults in a race of 'follow your leader,' is sufficient to arouse the enthusiasm of old and young alike. This member of the finny tribe has certainly a high sense of humour, and suggests the idea—to any one with a fine imagination—of being the re-embodied spirit of a human being. Every one who has travelled in the Antipodes knows the story of 'Pelorus Jack,' the celebrated porpoise who took up his abode for many years in the waters outside of Wellington, New Zealand, and seemed to regard himself as a sort of heaven-appointed pilot to all ships entering that port. No dainty morsels, however tempting, thrown overboard in the bay would tempt him to deviate from his self-appointed duty, until the ship was safely tied up at her moorings. We might almost believe that the spirit of some departed pilot had been

re-incarnated in this form. Alas ! we who sail the sea will see him no more, as the poor old chap was at last killed and eaten by a gigantic shark. One marvels at the sea birds gliding about in space without effort, seemingly at home upon the wing. These creatures certainly represent the last thought of Nature in the way of flying-machines, and appear to be equally at home upon the waves ; yet, strange to say, they become hopelessly sea-sick in a few minutes if left lying on the deck of a vessel in motion, thus proving that something more than imagination is the cause of *mal-de-mer* in human beings. It seems strange that sea birds are not snapped up by large fish, although perhaps the transparency of the water is a sufficient protection.

Perhaps nowhere upon the broad ocean does one find bluer water or clearer skies than in the vicinity of Madeira. That island is indeed a pearl of the sea, giving one at every turn enchanting views of patches of sugar-cane—orchards and vegetable gardens, rock and valley, with grass-clad slopes : a veritable Paradise after the gloom and harshness of Northern Europe. This perfection of climate is carried on to the Canary Islands, where most ships call, either at Las Palmas or Santa Cruz, for coaling purposes. On a fine day, the Peak of Teneriffe may be seen for nearly a hundred miles. Thousands of tourists pass the winter in these

islands in search of health or pleasure ; the dryness and purity of the atmosphere, as also the small rainfall, being peculiarly advantageous to people suffering from lung disease. Any one interested in antiquities may read up the historical notes referring to the time when the fabled Atlantis was inhabited by the most civilized race on earth. It is supposed the whole country was submerged during an earthquake, and that the Canary Islands and Madeira were the highest peaks of the lost continent. Recent submarine surveys seem to bear out this theory.

Once inside the tropics, flying fish are seen in shoals, arising out of the water with a spring, to which impetus is continued by an occasional touch with the tail on the crest of the wave, and sailing away for hundreds of yards to escape from enemies who desire to attack them in the water. Sometimes they make a mistake, and fall helpless upon the deck, to find their way as a delicacy to the cook-house. Strange to say, these and other varieties of fish are attracted by a light at night ; so that fisher-folk need only arrange a lamp and net in a suitable position in order to invite the finny guests to jump on board, like moths around a candle.

Sometimes the captain of a passenger liner has the consideration to run along the Western Coast of Fernando Da Noronha. If so, one may, for half-an-hour, enjoy a panorama of beauty rarely equalled in



the isles of the sea. The blending of the varied shades of green verdure, blue sea, the silvery spray of the surf, and dark cliffs combine to form a scene never to be forgotten. The Brazilians make use of the island as a place of isolation for political prisoners. It is said that Great Britain has made several futile efforts to purchase the place as a naval base and coaling station. As a possible Gibraltar, its advantages in the South Atlantic are obvious.

The Pernambuco Coast—although rather low and flat—appeals very much to our ideas of the romance of the tropics : a long succession of sandy beaches, protected by a corresponding line of coral reefs—affording ideal facilities for bathing and picnic parties, with endless groves of cocoanut palms—reminding one of Ceylon or the sunny isles of the Pacific. The heat of the climate is usually tempered by the prevalence of soft Trade winds blowing across the broad Atlantic. At other times it is hot and sweltering with a vengeance. At Bahia and Pernambuco the great percentage of the population is coloured. Mail boats call also at Rio Janeiro and Santos. In such cases there is nothing for it but to go ashore until the hour of sailing, as the blistering heat concentrated by the rays of the sun upon the decks of a steamer in port is quite insufferable ; and, in any case, the beautiful scenery and novel sights of Brazilian coast towns are well worth seeing—

after the monotony of a sea voyage. The Southern Coast is mountainous and rather pretty in a way, but these forest-clad hills are too consistently covered with vines and sombre vegetation to be really beautiful, the contrast of grassy glades and waterfalls being necessary to complete an entirely charming landscape. The hand of man has not made much impression upon this country so far. Approaching the River Plate, one finds that the muddy waters of the great river have made a big fight in the effort to drive back the restless waves of the blue sea. It is difficult to say where one ends and the other begins. But the river waters have pushed the ocean back for close upon a hundred miles, and the estuary of the River Plate assumes the dimensions of a veritable fresh-water sea ; it being ninety miles from Monte Video to Buenos Ayres upon the opposite side of the river.





ONE OF THE SEVEN FALLS OF THE IGUAZU.



## CHAPTER II

### A GLIMPSE OF BUENOS AYRES

BUENOS AYRES—the city of good air—is practically the distributing centre of all the passenger and industrial traffic of the River Plate, transshipment at this port being necessary in order to proceed to Paraguay by rail or river steamer. Most people will prefer the overland route via Entre Rios and Corrientes, in order to see as much as possible of the country they are passing through, breaking their journey at Concordia, Santa Tome, and Posadas for the sake of rest and variety, perhaps, if they desire it, returning by the Rio Paraguay and Parana. The necessary information can be obtained at the local offices of the Entre Rios Railway Company.

On arrival at Buenos Ayres we are impressed by the enormous masses of shipping in the Puerto Madero, and one may walk for miles along the dock frontages, right away to the Richuelo, lined with the regular passenger boats, ocean 'tramps,' and even a few

old-fashioned sailing ships, flying the flags of every maritime nation under the sun.

The Argentine is evidently a land of plenty; wheat, maize, and linseed may be seen passing from the elevators to the holds of the great ships waiting to receive their cargo, as also hides, wool, and all sorts of country produce. These docks, with their beautiful parks and blocks of warehouses, have all been won from the estuary of the River Plate. A long river wall was first built parallel with the river bank, about a mile out in the stream, the dock frontages secured with masonry, and the vacant spaces filled in with mud and sand dredged out of the entrance channels. A score of years ago the river held possession, and traffic was only possible by means of high-wheeled carts going out into the shallow water to meet the lighters, which received all goods from the ships lying far out in the roadstead. In the town one is confounded with the batch of tongues of this most cosmopolitan city of the world. Spanish is naturally in the ascendant, but Italian comes in a very good second. In the motley crowd one sees French, Germans, Spanish, Portuguese, Basques from the Pyrenees, Swiss, English, Italians from Lombardy and Naples, Argentines—very much in the minority in their own country—Syrian hawkers, Scandinavians, and last, but not least, even a few Japanese, some eighty of the little brown men having



GRAN HOTEL DEL PARAGUAY,  
VILLA EGUSQUIZA, ASUNCIÓN.





found their way to the land of the pampas. What is to be the result of this admixture of races it is hard to say. The conditions are far from satisfactory. The tendency is to centralize in vast cities. Buenos Ayres numbers something like 1,340,000, and is rapidly increasing her population. Rents are outrageously high. And, owing mostly to municipal taxes and monopolies, living is four times as dear as in London. Bread, for example, manufactured from Argentine wheat, is sold a hundred per cent. cheaper in the latter city than in the country where the grain is actually produced. What an object-lesson for economists! In the country the land is mostly sub-divided in large estates held by absentee owners, and worked by paid managers, with casual labour from Europe. Even the wheat lands which are so productive are rarely owned by the actual cultivator. The consequence is that we find a large floating population which has no permanent interest in the country. Instead of this most unhealthy state of affairs, a wise Government might easily have established a strong peasantry as the true backbone of their national prosperity. As a matter of fact every year close upon 200,000 of these hard-working Spanish and Italian peasants return to their own country with their hard-won savings. In fact, many of them go out only for the wheat and maize harvests, returning home at the close of the

season. In the city, wealth and progress are evidenced on every hand. The splendidly-horsed, heavy wagons used for street traffic—evidently kept up to a common standard by municipal regulations—are the finest I have seen. Electric tramways exist to such an extent as to be a veritable nuisance in the typical narrow streets of an old-fashioned town of this class. The people look decidedly healthy and robust—possibly on account of the perpetual sunshine and all-round good climatic conditions. We find several English daily newspapers, of which the oldest and most influential is the *Standard*, established some half-century ago by the Brothers Mulhall. Probably the Spanish *La Prensa* and *La Argentina* are the model papers of the world. They have initiated free advertising for the working classes, free consultation in the medical department for the poor, libraries, public halls, entertainment for distinguished visitors, museums, and no end of conveniences for the general public. Both in city and country, land values are going steadily up, and there is still a big margin before they reach their undoubted commercial value. With free trade—and moderate taxation—such a place should progress by leaps and bounds. Some 40,000 British are settled in the Argentine, and an enormous amount of English capital is invested in railways and other enterprises. One cannot help regretting that they have missed

many opportunities—for example, in the shipping line British ‘tramp’ steamers appear to hold their own in carrying cargo ; but the passenger companies make a very poor show indeed compared with their Continental competitors. All third-class passenger traffic from the Continent to Brazil and the River Plate—going and coming—probably does not fall much short of 1,000,000. Even at reduced rates, this means about a total of £6,000,000 in fares. The food stuffs supplied very little exceed a pound per head, leaving a margin of £5,000,000. These people nearly all travel on foreign steamers.



## CHAPTER III

### THE RIO PARANA

LEAVING the enormous masses of shipping in the Puerto Madero and the Richuelo far behind, we sped away towards the North. The turbid waters and magnitude of the stream must have considerably astonished the early Spanish navigators. In fact, it is only after leaving the estuary of the Rio de la Plata, and entering upon the lower course of the Parana, that it becomes possible to realize that we are really upon a river, rather than sailing the waters of an inland sea. The steamer winds in and out amongst low islands covered with sedges and lined with willow thickets. Some have been partially drained and planted up with fruit trees or poplar. The latter is used for making rafters, scaffoldings, and building purposes generally. Some people have already made a lot of money out of this business. In fine weather, we get long vistas of silver and green, with white houses, or sails of passing river craft glimmering in the background ; on a sunny day often





PLAZA CONSTITUCION, ASUNCION.



reminding one of its opposite extreme, the mirage of the desert.

In these lower waters—right up to Corrientes, in fact—much of the charm of a river voyage is lacking on account of the width of the stream. Rarely can more than one bank be seen at a time ; and, quite frequently, neither the one nor the other is visible for hours at a time. One cannot help forming the impression that the river was diverted from some other course and cut its way south through the pampas—after they had reached their present stage of geological formation. As we ascend, the banks—or ‘barrancas,’ as they call them here—gradually become higher. One longs for the placid reaches and sloping meadows characteristic of many smaller streams in other parts of the world. The water swirls along in perpetual flood, whirling into eddies and wreaths of foam, as though in a mortal hurry to reach the ocean. The current averages about two and a half knots. Floating downwards in a canoe, or boat, is an ideal lazy man’s picnic. He may fish, shoot, or lie back comfortably, and let old Father Time get along as best he may—hitching up to a tree at night and making a fire to do his simple cooking.

Our first call was at Rosario—the great wheat and maize emporium of the River Plate. New docks have recently been made, but the shipping accommodation is still unequal to the demands of trade. Business

appears to be always brisk and rents high. Notwithstanding the constant demand for increased house accommodation, capitalists appear to obtain better or quicker returns for their money in other investments. In the Old Country millions of money are turning in merely a beggarly  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., while out here people are inclined to turn up their noses at 10 per cent. returns on the almighty dollar. From Rosario one may now cross the Continent by rail to Valparaiso, on to the Pacific Coast ; or, travelling north, can pass over the frontier into Bolivia. After a few hours' delay, we resumed our voyage by steamer. The Parana might have been much more appropriately denominated the Rio de la Plata (the river of silver) than the estuary which now is known by that name. From here upwards, upon any clear day, the long expanses of silvery waters, glittering in the sunshine, the green islands, dotting the course of the river, and the ever-changing views of distant banks are certainly fair to look upon after the monotonous dead levels of the pampas. From Diamante right up to La Paz, we skirt the right bank.

In the province of Entre Rios, colonization has already made considerable progress. The capital, Parana, promises to become a very fine city in the near future. The pastoral industry is well advanced. Agricultural colonies are spreading over the face of



the country. The main drawback here appears to be the locusts. But wheat mostly escapes their ravages, being almost ripe for cutting before the season which these pests usually choose for their annual migration. There are a number of fairly prosperous German, Russian, and Jewish settlements. All sorts and conditions of men find their way out to the Plate, even down to large hordes of European gypsies, wandering about from place to place. Cereal growing—where land is still cheap—is one of the few branches of agriculture offering good chances of success even to the veriest novice. The sacks of wheat are loaded cheaply and expeditiously by a somewhat primitive method. The steamer is moored up against the bank—under a long, tunnel-shaped wooden shoot, which hangs at a gentle slope from the warehouse on top. The bags are pitched into this run—one at a time—and glide down into the hold in quick succession, without any further handling.

The La Plata valley is almost unique in the advantages offered to commerce. Contrary to the general rule, we have here a navigable highway for nearly 3,000 miles, through a range of country embracing almost every class of climate and soil, giving the greatest facility for interchange of the varied products of the tropics, sub-tropics, and temperate zone. The day is not far distant when we shall see scores of large cities spring up along the banks of these rivers.

Most of the islands—now overgrown with rank vegetation—could by a small outlay of capital be made enormously productive. Even under natural conditions, by getting some idea of the periodicity of the inundations, many of them are susceptible of profitable cultivation. On such land a return of even only a second crop would give good results. It is exasperating that the high banks permit no view of the country beyond. These 'barrancas,' when not too precipitous, are verdant with shrubs and creepers, running all over the ground down to the water's edge. Passengers by steamer see little of the towns on the way up. But a state of transition is evident on every hand, indicating the healthy progress of a new country. New buildings of modern style are the rule rather than the exception at most of these places.

At Goya we had a novel demonstration of the fact that we were getting beyond the range of Mother Grundy and the conventionalities of modern civilized life. A Corrientino carter, wearing a hideous yellow poncho, was driving a team composed of a horse, an ass, and three mules. The incident recalled to memory a similar sight in the Central Provinces, India, where, upon one occasion, I came across a ryot ploughing his fields with a donkey and a buffalo. There is a story current in the Antipodes that a few years ago the farm team of a German settler in South Australia consisted



RIVER SCENE, CORRIENTES





of a horse and the farmer's wife, who somehow—by the aid of a lever—kept level with the horse. The great and glorious East offers the biggest range of choice in matters of conveyances. One may drive horses, bullocks, buffaloes, camels or coolies all the live-long day—for the lowest possible fares. The beautiful little trotting bullock of Ceylon might, with advantage, be used all the world over; being really very fast and less likely to shy or bolt than the more high-spirited equine quadruped—a great consideration for children's carriages.

From Goya onwards the palm and bamboo begin to be in evidence. The islands are of alluvial formation, gradually rising beyond the reach of flood—by the constant deposit of silt. The Parana is the veritable river of the thousand isles which the North Country Indian dreamt of, as the abode of good warriors—in the great by-and-by. Right up to the confluence of the Rio Paraguay, the net-work of islands is simply amazing. The river forms an impassable barrier to certain forms of animal life, as in the case of the guanaco, which is never found east of the Parana.

The scenery improves as we go up. Bella Vista, as the name indicates, is decidedly pretty. White and brown cottages dotted about the hillside, amidst glossy orange groves, and a fine river in front, form a very pleasing picture to the voyager from down below.

Outside of the town a few large orange plantations help to produce a fine effect. The next town of importance is Corrientes, of revolutionary celebrity. The expanse of water at the junction of the two great rivers offers tempting boating facilities. The ignorance and squalor of the inhabitants of this city is in direct contrast to their natural opportunities. Considerable quantities of oranges are shipped from this port. But they are much inferior in quality to those grown further north. The people here have a bad reputation, but don't get much chance to indulge their revolutionary proclivities nowadays, as, in case of trouble brewing, the Central Government always sends out a special commissioner to investigate matters, and to re-organize the local administration.









## **NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE, PIRAPO**

---

The English Railway Company in Paraguay, known as the 'Ferro Carril Central Del Paraguay,' in establishing a connexion between Asuncion and Buenos Ayres, have linked up the bare plains of the south with the forest regions of Central South America. In the course of construction, the rivers Pirapo, Tebicuary-Guazu, and several lesser streams have been spanned by up-to-date iron bridges and long embankments to keep the line beyond the reach of periodical floods. Recently extended to the Argentine frontier to enable through traffic to be carried between Asuncion and Buenos Ayres, the railway has been re-equipped with locomotives, carriages, and wagons of the best modern type. By the opening of this through route, the Paraguay Central Railway takes a unique position amongst South American railways, both by its complete uniformity of modern equipment and by its strategic position as the key to the rich central regions of the Continent. New branches are being contemplated to meet the requirements of the growing traffic in the spontaneous natural products of the country.

Since the time of the Jesuits no systematic effort has been made to open up the resources of Paraguay by means of plantation industries or other commercial development until the twentieth century came along knocking at the door.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RIO PARAGUAY

FROM Corrientes upwards the islands are higher, and for the most part covered with an impenetrable mass of dense tropical foliage ; while here and there we see more open tracts, where the willows of the country make a hard fight to lift their heads above the parasitic creepers, which persistently climb and strangle many trees to death. If the River Plate were only better known, the river trip would undoubtedly attract thousands of tourists—in the winter. The scenery can hardly be called picturesque, but it has a charm of its own. Like different types of fair women, each river has always a distinct individuality. The voyage has most of the advantages of the sea, without the monotony and sea-sickness of the ocean deep. One is puzzled to know how the pilot steers so confidently by day and night, amidst the shifting sand-banks of this vast river. Even a novice may get an idea of the course by day from the appearance of the water. But

it is quite beyond my ken how on earth they keep to the winding channels in such a sea of waters during the dark nights. The alligator is common on the Rio Paraguay, and scores may be seen basking in the sunshine on the banks watching the passing steamer with philosophical indifference. Some would-be sportsmen on board kept up a constant fusillade which, to them, was a never-ending source of amusement, and did not seem to do the alligators any harm. According to the law of chances, the object aimed at by a novice is really least likely to be hit. The saurians of the Rio Paraguay appeared to be well aware of the fact, and took their baptism of fire without even condescending to blink.

Colonization is making considerable progress on the Chaco side, the soil being excellently adapted for the production of sugar-cane and cotton. Cattle also appear to do well upon the pasturage afforded by the prairie lands of this region. A Mr. Hardy has established a very successful colony at Las Palmas, worked partly by Indian labour, and in part by free colonists. The sugar-factory is fitted up with electric light and all the latest appliances. The Rio Paraguay is certainly a beautiful river. The graceful palm, the feathery bamboo, and drooping willow, casting reflections into silvery lagoons, all blend in exquisite harmony to charm the eye. The only thing to disturb

our philosophical contemplation of all this beauty is the busy hum and equally energetic action of the ubiquitous mosquito, who, during the summer months, in his own practical way, resents the presence of any sacrilegious intruder in his domains.

We pass near the ruined walls of Humaita, where Lopez and his Paraguayans kept the allied forces of Brazil and the Argentine in check for years. Game is sometimes visible on the banks ; and an ostrich fled in dismay before the approach of the steamer. Alligators fairly swarm at the entrance to some of the lagoons, and at certain favourite spots there appeared to be regular nurseries where hundreds were crowded together. They are very much smaller than the African crocodile, the very largest running to eight or ten feet in length, while the average are much smaller. There are several different varieties, one being quite diminutive.

The banks of the Chaco are always low, consisting mostly of tangled undergrowth, alternated by open savannahs, thickly dotted with palms, as far as the eye can reach. Nature is everywhere supreme, and there is but seldom any evidence of human existence. The population theories of some philosophers don't count for much here in South America, where millions of acres of the finest land in the world—as yet practically untouched by the hand of man—are still





COUNTING HOUSE OF KRAUCH AND CO.,  
IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION.



available for settlement. Many of our present evils arise not from over-population, but from the manner in which that population is distributed. The waters of the Paraguay are clear and transparent, offering a pleasing contrast to the muddy Parana. A few steamers are passed on their way downwards, laden with oranges. The masses of golden fruit, stacked in bulk on deck, produce a very fine effect.

From Villeta upwards the Paraguayan side is high, and, for the first time, we can get a good view of both banks of the river at the same time. The deep, rapid-flowing stream, gliding along beneath dark woods, alternated here and there by palms and orange groves, is decidedly pretty—although I am afraid the class of people who travel on its waters are not of the sort to appreciate anything so unsubstantial as mere artistic effect. Millions of oranges are shipped annually for Buenos Ayres from San Antonio and Villeta, respectively ten and twenty miles below Asuncion. With an enterprising Government and an industrious population, Paraguay might easily rival Florida, and supply half the world with oranges. This river is already actually navigated by steam craft for 1,500 miles beyond Asuncion, right up to Cuyaba, in the heart of Matto Grosso. The South American native races have few wants, all of which, in this highly favoured country, are easily gratified.

Beyond that standard of living they have little ambition.

Large areas in the interior are far less known than the darkest corners of the heart of Africa. Most books professing to describe Central South American Republics merely perpetuate the errors of old-time Spanish authors from the time of Azara downwards, which have been repeated so often that many modern geographers have accepted such mistaken assertions for established facts. We of local experience have learnt—very often through our pockets—that, perhaps owing to the easygoing conditions of life, there has been a certain tendency to produce most beautiful and elaborate plans of large territories without leaving the comfort and security of one's private house. Even to this day in some old official documents the limits of landed properties are defined by the distance one may hear the beat of a drum from a given point. Considering the influence of wind upon sound, this system of delimitation is—to say the least of it—a little indefinite. The present government, recognizing these facts, have initiated a proper survey of the whole territory.







## RIVER SCENE, CHACO SIDE

---

The banks of the river Paraguay in the Chaco, on the higher ground consist frequently of 'Palmares' or palm groves—a scene of beauty indescribable, with the leaves waving gracefully in the breeze. As they are at some distance one from another, grass grows freely in between. On the backwaters or lagoons—on the flooded land—there is mostly a fringe of low forest entangled with vines and undergrowth. Millions of alligators lie about the banks, ready to take refuge in the water in case of disturbance. These creatures are easily shot. But unless the bullet severs the spinal column—or enters the brain—they mostly wriggle off into the water before dying, and are carried away by the current. The quantity of fish must be considerable to support the vast numbers of these creatures seen on the Rio Paraguay. It seems to be pretty well established that there exists some unknown monster in these waters, which has never yet been seen by any European, although there is a case on record where a number of English people witnessed an extraordinary commotion in the water, presumably caused by this creature undermining the bank and causing tons of earth to fall into the water. The Chaco Indians harpoon the alligator in much the same style as the Arabs of the Soudan. They consider the flesh excellent, and make use of the fat to rub over their bodies in order to keep mosquitoes away. A very effectual process after it becomes a bit rank.

## CHAPTER V

### THE HEAD WATERS OF THE RIVER PLATE

FEW people realize the romance of this great river, which passes unnoticed by their very doors, nor imagine for a moment that the same waters which float the great liners in the docks at Buenos Ayres, and afford facilities for boating and picnic parties in the Tigre, also away up in Bolivia and Brazil, flow in front of the rude toldos of thousands of wild Indians who have never seen a white man ; coming from lands of untold wealth in rubber, gold, timber, and cattle, where patriarchal Brazilian estancieros own hundreds of thousands of cattle, and yet not a dollar in cash for want of access to a market ; from a land of continuous forest stretching right away to the Amazon, in which the ring of the backwoodsman's axe has not yet been heard by the wild game hiding away in the dark shades of the woods. Small wonder that the monkey has developed a prehensile tail to come to the help of his four hands in getting about from tree



to tree. This is certainly a more pleasant and beautiful highway than by travelling in perpetual gloom and shade, like the poor biped, who has lost his capacity to make use of a natural overhead railway.

These facts speak for themselves—and indicate a certain lack of energy and enterprise in the modern Argentines. I make bold to say that if a similar population of an Anglo-Saxon race lived in a city of this size at the mouth of the great river, they would long ere this have explored every nook and corner, navigated the tributaries, exploited the natural resources of the country, and made homes for untold millions of the human race. The poor and needy would have gone north to better their conditions, while the rich might have found pleasure and interest in life in hunting, exploring, and doing things, the best and most wholesome recreation possible.

A glance at the map shows the possibilities of the situation. Shade it off for a hundred leagues north of Buenos Ayres, and there is practically no population worth speaking of. The Parana proper takes its rise away up in Brazil. At one time the Jesuits had quite a large population in their settlements above the Guayra Falls. These people lived prosperously for a considerable time until the raids of Brazilian slave-hunters made the position untenable. The residue were removed by strenuous efforts to Villa Rica, Paraguay.

The modern inhabitants of that town, being largely descended from these refugees, are known locally as Guarenas, as referring to the district of their first origin. This region will be opened up to some extent by the construction of the Brazilian Atlantic railway. The Guayra Falls are the Niagara of South America, really of much greater magnitude and volume of water—as may be seen from the following figures: Niagara has a fall of 160 feet; the Guayra runs into 180 feet. In width the former is approximately 1,800 yards, while the latter has a spread of over 4,000 yards. The Guayra is thus more than double the width of the celebrated cataract in the valley of the St. Lawrence. Unfortunately, this natural phenomenon is inaccessible to the ordinary tourist—unless he is prepared to endure a good deal of physical discomfort while making the journey. What the falls may be worth in the future in the way of developing electrical power for a radius of a hundred miles or more around the district it is difficult to imagine or foresee. Below the falls, and down to its confluence, at the city of Corrientes, with the Rio Paraguay, we find a country where a beginning has been made to exploit the vast forest of timber, the natural yerbales, and the cattle districts on either side in Southern Paraguay and Corrientes.

The other great tributary—the Rio Paraguay—has its source in the Laguna Xarayes, almost in touch





THE ALTO PARANA.



with the waters of the Amazon, flowing for a long distance through a region quite undeveloped and practically unexplored. Rubber is worked to some extent, gold-mines also have been exploited off and on for centuries. There has been no scientific exploration of these districts to show what forms of mineral wealth have escaped the unskilled observation of the ignorant prospectors. Southern Matto Grosso is noted for its fine grazing lands and superior stock, disproving the theory that cattle will not thrive in the equatorial regions. The Lloyd Brazileros keep their steamers from Rio running up the river to Corumba most of the year, while the depth of the stream is normal. Lower down we come to districts in the Chaco where large companies are running establishments with their own little railways, and employing thousands of peons, in the Quebracho extract business. The higher lands of Paraguay are the most attractive, the luxuriant vegetation and graceful coco palms being a pleasure to look upon. The banks of the River Paraguay on the higher grounds on the Chaco side consist frequently of 'Palmares,' palm groves pure and simple, constituting a scene of real beauty, with the leaves waving in the slightest breeze—that is, until the monotony of the thing ceases to appeal to one's imagination. On the backwaters or lagoons there is mostly a fringe of low forest entangled with vines and undergrowth.

Thousands of alligators lie about the banks ready to take refuge in case of disturbance. These creatures are easily shot, but unless the bullet enters the brain or severs the spinal column, they mostly wriggle off into the water, and the bodies are carried away by the swirling current. The quantity of fish must be considerable to support the vast numbers of these creatures seen in the Rio Paraguay. It seems to be pretty well established that there exists some unknown monster in these waters which has never yet been seen by any European, though there is a case on record, where a number of English people witnessed an extraordinary commotion in the water presumably caused by this creature undermining the bank, and causing tons of earth to fall into the water.

The Chaco Indians harpoon the alligator in much the same manner as the Arabs of the Soudan. They consider the flesh excellent to fill up vacant spaces, and use the fat to rub over their bodies in order to keep off the mosquitoes. One would imagine it to be a very effectual remedy, with an odour which no self-respecting mosquito could face and live after it becomes a bit rank.

The Lower Paraguay and the Parana are studded with islands of alluvial formation. The more recent being as yet unfitted for the growth of the larger forms of vegetable life are covered with coarse grass and

cane brakes, often suggesting the idea of a rice-field. Indeed, that similarity is certain some day in the near future to materialize into actual fact, the lower grounds of the Parana valley being veritably the finest rice-lands on earth. The time has come when the most productive agricultural area of the River Plate should be developed to its full capacity. Think of the millions which are being spent in the irrigations of inferior lands in other parts of the world!—the vast engineering projects which are being carried out for the conveyance or storage of water in artificial reservoirs. The reclamation of the islands of the Parana is a comparatively easy process. Indeed, some are only subject to flood during extraordinary seasons. Many others leave a sufficient margin of time to harvest crops before the season of inundation. In any case, occasional losses by flood would not interfere materially with the handsome margin of profit coming of a certain success during fortunate years. Protection by means of strong embankments need not be a costly operation when one considers that the soil thus rendered susceptible of cultivation would be easily worth a hundred pounds a hectarea. In some cases, the work might be done by hydraulic pumping machinery, in other places with the steam shovel or scoop. To get an idea of the productiveness of such land we must go to Holland or Belgium. But the Parana has an enormous advantage

over European lands, in the fact that, like the Nile, it is possible at flood time to let the muddy waters deposit in the field of the cultivators the vegetable mould and loam carried down from the primæval forests of the tropics. In times of drought the facilities for irrigation would be unique.

Some day these riverine districts will prove to be the Garden of the River Plate. Up to the present the only attempt at utilizing the islands has been in the immediate vicinity of Buenos Ayres in the way of fruit and timber. Except from the productive point of view the rising towns on the banks of the lower river are utterly uninteresting—unless one wishes to see the aristocracy of mendicants in the city of Parana going about on horseback begging for alms. These picturesque reminders of the olden days are not now very numerous. But a few of the old folk still follow it up as a profession. Regular steam communication may now be made use of right up to Cuyaba, the capital of Matto Grosso.







## GOVERNMENT HOUSE, ASUNCION

---

All of the public buildings in Asuncion were built by Lopez just before the war.

Government House is finely situated on the high 'barranca' overlooking the River Paraguay to the wilderness of the Chaco on the other side. This palace is not the residence of the President, as might be supposed, but consists of the public offices of the President and the members of his Cabinet. The views from the windows on the upper storey are splendid, and the wind, blowing off the river, keeps the place cool and fresh on the hottest day. An article in the Constitution prohibits the use of the building for residential purposes; an idea that some other nations with more pretence to civilization might make use of to their own advantage, as indicating that out of business hours the highest official is merely a private citizen like anybody else. A few years ago, in the only serious revolution which ever occurred in the capital, President Ferreira was besieged in these offices for a couple of days, before he consented to send in his resignation. Quite a number of his predecessors have been quietly arrested and sent out of the country for the time being, until the new 'régime' was firmly established. Peaceful revolutions of this kind are more prompt and less costly than a general election at home. In Paraguay, such a thing as the 'referendum' is impossible, because the common people consider politics a bore, and only ask to be left alone to spend their money on some expensive frippery, and sit for hours at night listening to the twanging of a guitar and the singing of songs improvised for the occasion. So, in this state of affairs, the course of political events is necessarily guided by the educated few in the great towns—and such followers as may come within the sphere of their influence.

## CHAPTER VI

### ASUNCION DEL PARAGUAY

PEOPLE are never satisfied. The ideal climate is always somewhere else, and half the world—if they have means and leisure—are ever on the quest for a contrast to the monotony of their own quiet firesides. Buenos Ayres, London, or New York, as winter residences, leave something to be desired. The bleak southern winds—fresh from Antarctic snowfields—have a way of penetrating the thickest clothing, and making one long for equatorial sunshine by way of a change. To those happy few who are able to get away, I should say, Why not take a run up the river, and leave gloom and boredom behind you for a month or two? As I write these lines in a land of sunshine and crisp air, I see in front a wide bay stretching back from the River Paraguay to the city of Asuncion on a high ridge, sloping down to the water frontage. The Palace and other Government buildings, if not particularly imposing, certainly look rather nice and in good taste.



On the other side of the bay, and over in the Chaco, green banks, luxurious pasturage, palms, and evergreen trees and shrubs are trying to grow up beyond the reach of the innumerable climbing plants which threaten their very existence in these alluvial lands by the river. Some half a score of steamers, mostly belonging to the Mihanovich Company, are loading yerba and fruit, and millions of golden oranges are stacked in bulk on the upper deck of one of these craft—a good sight for the eyes of an artist or the hungry people of less favoured climes. A long string of bare-foot Paraguayan women, in loose and airy costume, glide along gracefully with baskets upon their heads from the fruit-trucks of the railway company to the steamer's deck. One would like to be able to say that these womenfolk had the figures of Greek statues combined with the beauty of Venus. Alas for the romance of the twentieth century! I am sorry to dispel the illusion, but there is not even a moderately good-looking woman amongst the crowd. And the inevitable cigar does not add to their attractiveness. Were they better favoured in the eyes of man I suppose they would not have to resort to this manner of earning a living. So, as elsewhere, the beautiful *senoritas* remain at home to grace the home nest.

Still, the out-door workers seem happy enough, and chat merrily with their companions as they pass

along. There is no doubt the carrying of burdens upon the head is a very fine thing for the development of the neck, chest, spinal column, and loins ; moreover—as a curious scientific fact—conducive to a cheerful and alert state of mind, as a result of the correct breathing, coming of moderate exercise in the erect position.

The orange trade must indeed be profitable to the happy monopolist who stands the losses inevitable from the careless handling of loose fruit being pitched about by peons—without any care whatever for other people's property. In Paraguay, cows, horses, pigs, monkeys, and parrots, all feast to repletion during the orange season, which lasts most of the year round. In fact, three successive crops are often seen in different stages of development at the same time upon each tree.

Further down the embankment thousands of logs of fine timber lie on the banks and in the water awaiting shipment. The arrangements are worthy of the flint age period, the logs being rolled about from place to place by gangs of barefoot peons. For some incomprehensible reason these people have all this timber squared by hand in the primaeval forests, where it is felled by axemen, who work by contract. This ridiculous process not only wastes a third part of the wood, but multiplies the labour cost by ten ; and, as



BRITISH CONSULATE, ASUNCION.





the pay of the peons averages something like a dollar gold per day, it is not much wonder that large quantities of North American lumber finds its way as far up as Parana, notwithstanding the fact that it has to pay ocean freightage, and is worked up in a high-wage country. The moral is obvious. The holiday-seeker may have no end of nice boating and picnics on the river, varied by a bit of river fishing or shooting in the Chaco.

The city itself has lost much of its primitive charm during late years in the process of being modernized. Foreigners—mostly in the way of mechanics or small shopkeepers of the Latin races—are now much in evidence, while in the wholesale business, the Spanish, Italians, and Germans take the lead. Why the English should be left out of it is hard to understand. If other people manage to do safe and profitable business on the credit system, why should not we? The absurdity of the position is evident, when it is known that the bulk of English manufactured goods comes in via France, other people having the profit of handling British goods.

In spite of its drawbacks, Asuncion is by far the cleanest and nicest town on the river above Buenos Ayres. This is partly owing to its fine natural drainage upon a ridge and the occasional tropical downpours, which remove all impurities in torrents of rain water.

At other times the clear air and constant sunshine give disease germs a bad time of it. Lung diseases are almost unknown. In fact, it is doubtful if tuberculosis is ever contracted in the country. Many sufferers from this malady come up from the Argentine every year and experience decided relief and a permanent cure, if they remain in the country. Indeed, with the open-air treatment, success is always certain, except, perhaps, in extremely advanced cases.

The open market-place is a curiosity to visitors, where thousands of women—more or less ill-favoured (the waifs and strays of the populace), I am sorry to say—may be seen haggling over their wares, mostly small heaps of fruit, eggs, cheese, cigars, vegetables, or other country produce. One must admit they are certainly very polite and very well behaved. The incessant babble of many tongues chattering at the same time, makes a constant hum, which reminds one of the open-air fairs of India or Africa. These markets seem to have been a first step in social evolution previous to the existence of towns, and may be seen as such in their most primitive form in many parts of Central Africa and Asia, where in the absence of any medium of exchange, the people meet periodically to exchange or barter their wares. In Asuncion it is *infra dig.* for ladies to visit the market ; and not much wonder—the scenes are not suggestive of nice things.

Otherwise the capital is very much like any other South American town of its class, with its really pretty gardens hidden away from public view in central courtyards after the old Oriental custom introduced into Spain by the Moors. One old church, left unfinished from the time of Lopez, exists apparently only to demonstrate the fertility of the soil and climate, grass and weeds growing out of the joints between the bricks on the dome ; and, more curious still, a small palm-tree has taken root in a sheltered spot on the roof with a young fig-tree upon the opposite side.

With a population of only 80,000, pretty well centralized, the wheel traffic is mostly confined to mule trams from the port to some of the suburbs.

For some reason, hotel accommodation is about twice as costly as in Buenos Ayres, probably because their expenses in Paraguay are about 50 per cent. less. Mechanics and peons receive much the same wages as in the Argentine, but are less competent and reliable. One is struck by the fact that there are no idle people about awaiting the chance of employment ; in fact, the very poor as we know them in Buenos Ayres and Europe do not exist in Paraguay. Up to a certain point there is a wholesome air of prosperity everywhere, that is of a material kind of welfare which is sufficient for most people : good air, sufficient food, and no protracted nor very hard work. These

conditions will change for the worse with what is called civilization—that is, if true civilization does not come along first.

There are many pleasant drives in the vicinity. A few leagues away a colony of European fruit-growers have been successfully established for some years. San Bernardino—a rather nice watering-place on the banks of a pretty lake—is within easy reach by a short railway journey through lovely scenery to Aregua, or Patinoque, from thence by steamer across the lake to the foot of the Cordilleras. Most people from Buenos Ayres put up there for a time. Certainly if they desire quiet and repose after a strenuous life, it is the right place. Some people have recently built very nice summer residences at Aregua, and on Sundays and feast days quite a lot of pleasure-seekers take a holiday run out to the lake. Socially, things are dull for English people, but they cannot expect to have everything they want—with sunshine and butterflies thrown in—in the middle of winter, even in Paraguay.

John Bull is very much in a minority up here, more is the pity! He might have been here in his hundreds of thousands if he only had an eye to business.

If the tourist is a bit of an antiquarian or interested in ancient South American history, he should





SEÑORA MELCHORA SAGÜER.



SEÑORA DEIDAMIA HEYN.



MISS LOLA BAREIRO.



MISS HORTENSIA AGUÍNAGA



visit the Biblioteca Nacional, where he will find the finest collection of old Spanish documents in existence, relating to River Plate history and annals of the Jesuits, one part dating from 1534 to the year 1600, also interesting information as to what was practically an era of State Socialism under the dictatorships of Francia and Lopez. Most of these musty old documents have passed through many vicissitudes. After being carted away by the last Lopez in the hope of saving them from the Argentines and Brazilians, they remained for years at Piribebuy in the houses of simple peasants who could neither read nor write, and who often used valuable manuscripts for the purposes of waste paper. From an historical point of view a careful examination of these papers would fill up many blanks in South American history.

The ' Museo de Bellas Artes ' is also worth a visit, and boasts at least one genuine Murillo, with some half dozen other paintings by old masters, which would grace any European collection. A strange place indeed to find such works of art in the heart of South America ! Portraits of many old historical personages are also preserved in this institution.

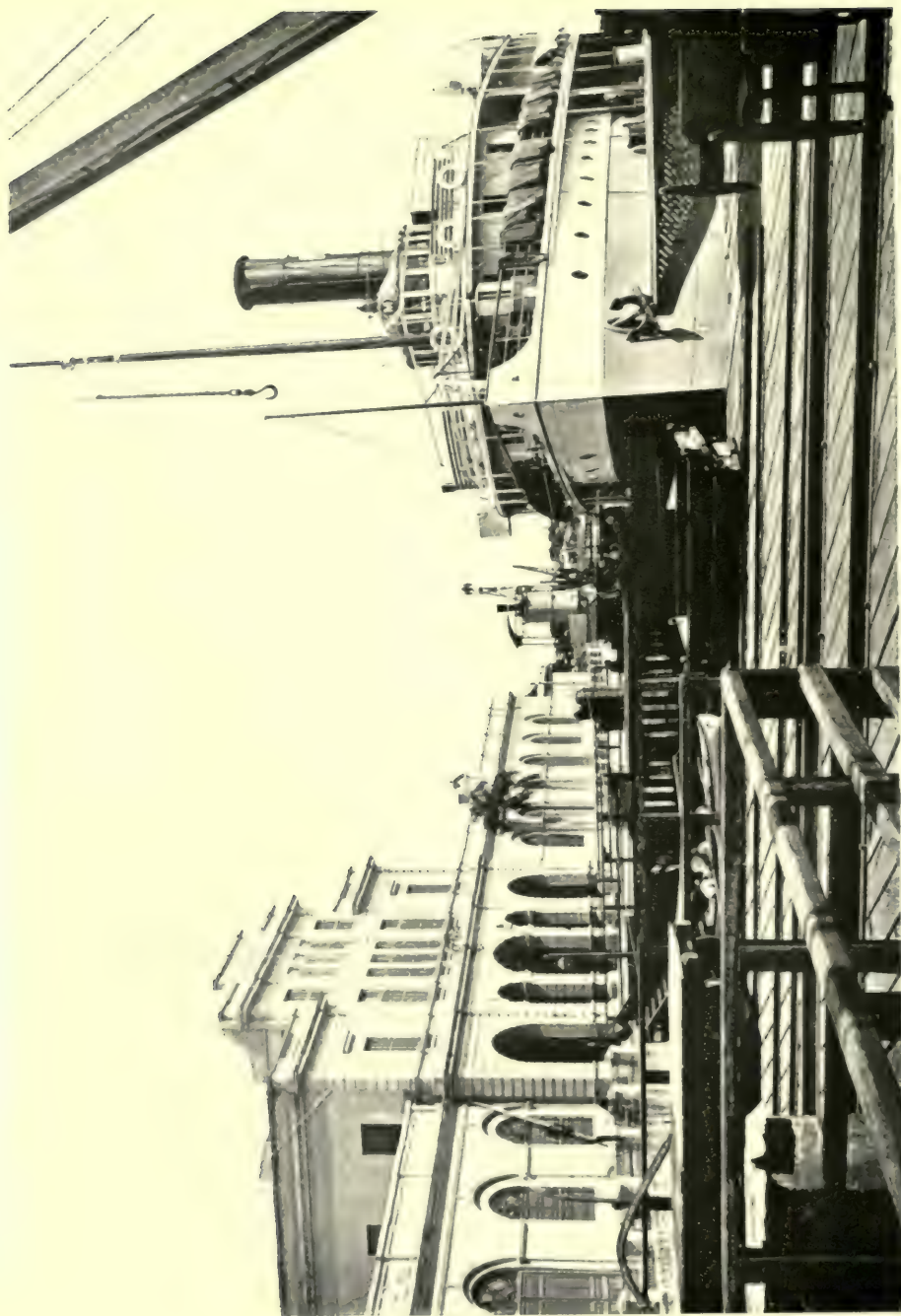
There is a project to lay down electric tramways costing 2,000,000 gold. Where the traffic is to come from in such a compact town of this size to pay for the initial outlay it is difficult to see. Most of the people

are of healthy, active habits, and do a good deal of walking. The old-fashioned mule trams are running half their time empty. Two million dollars spent in the purchase of suitable lands for colonization, or even in railway enterprise out in the country, would really do something, and the towns would look after themselves. Here, as in other places, the money that is earned in the rural districts is, too often, frittered away publicly and privately without any good result to any one concerned, in fact, quite the contrary. Some day they will learn—as people are learning elsewhere—that to go forward we must first go back and keep to the sure foundation laid for us by good old Mother Nature.

At Tacumbu—on the summit of the ridge at the back of the city—one gets a magnificent view over the reaches and backwaters of the river in all its ramifications both above and below the town, and away over the woods of the Chaco, for leagues and leagues, into the wilderness of the interior.







RIVER STEAMER  
AT THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, ASCUNCIÓN.

## CHAPTER VII

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. I

[Some readers may be disappointed in not finding the names of many of the localities described in the Monkey-land chapters. They must be content with the assurance that they are told just as much as is good for little boys to know about certain romantic incidents of Paraguayan history.]

AFTER mature reflection, the author has decided to publish these sketches in the form in which they were originally written. For reasons, more or less obvious to people who know the country, it is not desirable that private individuals should go out treasure-hunting in Paraguay. The history of that land is very sad and abounds in pathetic incidents. Many families perished utterly during the war, and left their money and plate interred in some secluded spot, awaiting the time of peace, which never came for them. The country people are very superstitious, and often fancy at night that they see flitting lights guarding these hoards of the dead ; also that they hear the jingle of metallic currency—as the ghostly owners count

over their hidden wealth. But the great tragedy occurred during the retreat northwards of the Paraguayan army before the advance of the Brazilians. What the vast accumulations of gold amounted to in the Treasury, during the wise and temperate reigns of Drs. Francia and the first Lopez, no one can now say, but after the careful sifting of evidence of some of the still existing eye-witnesses, I do know that Lopez carried with him at least seven cart-loads of 'specie'—amounting to over £1,000,000 sterling. Eventually, during the hot pursuit of the Brazilians, one cart-load of this money was thrown over the banks of a rapid-flowing river where, presumably, it still remains, probably now covered over with mud and sand. The remaining six cart-loads were hurried away into the midst of a huge estero or swamp, where the contents were buried and the location marked for future guidance by the erection of a wooden cross. This was eventually burned down during a prairie fire. But there is still one man living who traced the wheel tracks right up to their destination, and many of the old inhabitants of the district are familiar with the story.

Lopez and his escort all perished during the war. All official records were lost. The common people say that part of the escort were shot, and their bodies thrown upon top of the money-boxes to guard them



from marauders. This may or may not be true. But the peasantry firmly believe it to be a fact, and will make a long detour, rather than pass any of these places alone or at night. Madame Lynch—the paramour of Lopez—is said to have destroyed the plans of these hiding-places when she was refused an asylum in the country after the war was concluded. However it be, the cash remains up there where the dead men interred it to the present day. If recovered by the Government of the country, this money would be sufficient to place the finances of the Republic upon a sound basis. Private individuals occasionally unearth some of these hidden hoards, and mysteriously become rich all of a sudden. Of course, this system of burying money was common in all countries until banking institutions became safe. Even to the present day the custom prevails to such an extent in India, that it is estimated people have gold, silver, and precious stones to the value of £1,000,000,000 safely hidden away in the ground. Fortunately, it matters little to humanity if fictitious wealth in the form of any medium of exchange is withdrawn from circulation for any time—or all time—although it may be a serious matter for the individual or nation. Having this explanation, the reader will understand that these sketches—written in the wilds—are so true to nature that I have not the heart to touch them.

‘ Ramblings in Monkey-land ’ must not then be regarded in the light of a romance, written for the recreation and information of grown-up children, but an extremely graphic and realistic narration of actual fact. In reality, these notes were jotted down from time to time, as opportunity offered, from many a forest encampment upon the banks of swirling tropical streams, or ’neath the shade of the great lumbering ox-cart, which may aptly be described as the ‘ Prairie Schooner ’ of the southern continent. Being engaged in a quest which has cost the world some hundreds of human lives, the writer’s personal safety demands a certain poetic licence as to descriptive detail. The result may be the re-discovery of one of the lost gold mines of the Ancient Incas ; possibly the finding of a new class of animal hitherto unknown to science. In any case, the last chapter—if there be any last chapter—will clear up the mystery, and contain some account of interesting events which transpired in the good old times when ‘ Might was right.’ However, if the reader expects too much of the sensational he had better keep to the yellow-backs, because in real life, even in the backwoods of South America, we are not treed by jaguars or scalped by Indians every day of our lives, although it is possible occasionally to get up a mild degree of excitement to keep one’s circulation in good order. So in our search for some new thing we



MARKET-PLACE, ASUNCION.





commence wanderings at a spot where others usually return to civilization and the society of their fellows.

Most people visit Asuncion in search of warmth and sunshine. It may be said with perfect confidence that in these matters they are never disappointed. In this city, surely, must have originated the saying that only Englishmen and mad dogs walk on the sunny side of the public highways. Rectangular streets paved with stone, low, whitewashed walls, and tiled roofs form an ideal combination for getting together the maximum amount of heat upon a given space. As a consequence, for several hours in the middle of the day one does not see a single soul upon the move except perhaps the aforesaid Englishman or his demented puppy-dog. At the best of times the amount of traffic is wonderfully small; indeed, it is rather a relief to see the really big crowd of chattering womenfolk gathered together at the central market in the early morning. In fact, it reminds one of a public bazaar in India, or the East, shorn of the picturesque costumes, the motley assemblage of different races, and, I am sorry to say, the dignified deportment of most Orientals. Long lines of women, squatting in the dust, display little piles of mandioca or sweet potatoes, cobs of maize, heaps of beans, or pyramids of oranges, for sale to the townspeople. They are not very energetic saleswomen, puffing away complacently at their huge cigars as

though mere spectators at a public procession. It is difficult to move about without stepping upon stray babies or the bare feet of passers-by. It is considered *infra dig.* for the upper class of ladies to attend the public market, so that servants have to do the household buying. Good looks are very much the exception with these poor folk. Moreover, the ordinary costume, a black shawl over a cotton gown, is not as becoming as it might be. Still, one cannot help admiring the luxuriant growth of black, glossy hair, always carefully combed and brushed. Nature invariably provides the most charming head-gear for a woman, if she only gave it a tithe of the attention required by her ridiculous bonnets. The Indian type is somewhat in evidence. The really beautiful part of Asuncion is in the outskirts, where nature has undertaken the adornment of native ranchos and plots of ground as yet unbuilt upon. Orange groves, clumps of bananas, coco palms, and shrubs of varied foliage flourish amazingly in spite of the somewhat dry and sandy soil. A few days suffice to exhaust the novelties of the capital. If one desires really good fun, and to see something of the people, it is best to travel third-class. Although men, women, and children of the lower classes smoke incessantly and are somewhat reckless in their habits of expectoration, they are decidedly less assertive in their bad manners than a similar class of our own countrymen.

The scenery along the line is always pretty—sometimes beautiful. The long expanses of low scrub are redeemed from monotony by the waving fronds of the lovely coco palm and long vistas of open prairie.

A considerable population is evidenced by the numbers of little brown cottages scattered, as it were, broadcast over the whole country side, each with its microscopic cultivation patch of staple foods and tobacco. The camps are still covered with coarse indigenous grasses. Modern brick houses, with tiled roofs, are becoming the rule rather than the exception in all the little towns by the railway, but the ugliness and discomfort of such structures are enough to give any one the heart-ache. One can't help wondering what these people would think of a typical Indian bungalow, with its broad shady verandah all round, the well-kept lawn and shady compound of ornamental trees and shrubbery. Proceeding inland, the low woods gradually merge into veritable primaëval forests. At Paraguari, the high rolling camps, in contrast with distant hill tops, are very attractive. Then for some leagues the almost perpendicular face of a forest-clad ridge gives what is practically a bird's-eye view of tropical wood. In December the masses of golden flowers of the 'Ivira-pitah' produce a very fine effect. A railway bridge spans the Tebecuary, a serpentine, muddy, rapid-flowing, mosquito-infested stream.

The first town of any importance is Villa Rica, in climate a pleasant contrast to the capital, and still possessing much of the restful charm of old South American cities ; the back streets, which have not been ' improved ' beyond recognition, are quiet grassy lanes, where mud or dust are alike unknown. Most of the houses are hidden away amidst shady orange groves. Such Arcadian simplicity would be irresistible if people would only live up to it. Many of these people possess right to their hand a wealth of nature and beauty which rich people in other lands can only acquire by the expenditure of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of pounds. Yet I doubt if these sons and daughters of the tropics ever give a thought to the beauties of their own country. In fact, most of them appear to be quite unconscious of their very existence. How is this ? The son of the desert is always a bit of a philosopher, and frequently of the poetic temperament as well. A camp man, after gazing admiringly at a flock of pet birds, remarked benevolently, for my information as a foreigner, that the little birds would make an excellent stew. So the utilitarian and materialistic temperament exists equally in the peasant and the up-to-date man of science. The first practises his creed upon opportunity, while the latter, thank goodness, does not appear to have the courage of his convictions.



In Paraguay one notices a great contrast between the ignorance of the country people and the growing refinement and culture of the townspeople.

While in Villa Rica, a fine plantation, known as the 'Quinta Inglesa,' established in this district may be easily visited. It does one's heart good to see the long telescopic vistas of banana clumps, planted every way in rows, mathematically correct, whichever direction one may look; the rich brown earth, kept perfectly clean by systematic cultivation, harmonizes perfectly with the shimmering green of the enormous folded leaves of the young banana shoots; while, viewed from a height, the eye is held by a perfect sea of waving foliage, seeming to respond to the slightest wind.

In these countries, from the artistic point of view, the banana, or plantain, is an ideal plant for lining avenues or border work of any kind. I often thought that if I were the happy possessor of a banana plantation I should be content to end my career in such an Arcadian retreat. In other days I have seen the plant growing to its greatest perfection on the slopes of Mount Kilima-Njaro, in East Central Africa. In that country the bunches are so large that they are mostly lashed to a pole and carried home between two men or women, as being too heavy for one person to manage alone. The fruit is decidedly nutritious and

wholesome in combination with cereal foods. But in those parts of the world like East Central Africa, where it is the staple food, dilation of the intestinal organs and enlargement of the spleen is an invariable result. Banana flour, prepared according to the process adopted by African races, is almost a specific for diarrhœa or dysentery. As Paraguay is merely sub-tropical, and liable to some degree of frost, the plant requires careful treatment to give good results. For this reason, although one sees a few clumps at almost every native ranch, the fruit is somewhat scarce. The author's experience goes to show that, although Paraguay is undoubtedly a magnificent agricultural country, yet, owing to frequent torrential rains and rank growth of parasitic vegetation, systematic cultivation and constant stirring-up of the soil is essential to set free fresh nutritive elements for plant life and to keep the ground free from noxious weeds.

This can only be done profitably by utilizing skilled agricultural labour, using horses with suitable implements adapted to rapid cultivation. I might also state that although my own plantation has given very satisfactory results, yet I am quite sure that the average Colonial or North American backwoodsman, being usually keen on the pursuit of the almighty dollar, would have done very much better from a commercial point of view.

Leaving pretty well the last vestiges of civilization behind at Villa Rica, I took the train onwards to Maciel, passing a succession of high rolling camps, dark forests, and a distant view of the central Cordilleras. Then it became necessary to continue the journey in a bullock-cart, and wind in and out amidst clumps of wood and native clearings, mud ranchos or patches of sugar-cane and maize ; here and there a path ; here and there a perfect tangle of vines and undergrowth.

The driver, sitting comfortably or lazily in the front of his cart, controlled the oxen with a long bamboo pole, made more terrifying to these animals by waving plumes of feathers, hiding the existence of a sharp spike, with which they are prodded in case of necessity. The melancholy creaking of the huge wheels upon the wooden axles reminds one of the 'sakeeyahs,' or irrigating waterwheels, of Eastern countries. It is a far cry from Arabia to Paraguay, yet one sees the same bits for bridles, and the desert man's camel whip, here made from the hide of the tapir and used for horses.

The weather was somewhat trying, if not actually depressing ; dark, murky clouds obscured the sky ; the humid summer heat was felt alike by man and beast. The peons, deprived of their customary siesta, slouched their sombreros and crawled along listlessly, like so many nocturnal animals disturbed in their

mid-day sleep ; the vegetation drooped, and all nature seemed to have taken a rest, while silence reigned supreme, except for the melodious piping of the 'cicadae,' the notes of some being low and sweet, whilst others get up a very fair imitation of a railway whistle, much toned down in volume and quality. The continuous and combined efforts of these little musicians are decidedly restful and pleasing. Rank grasses obstructed our progress, and the undrained water channels, blocked by decaying vegetation, were exasperatingly frequent—in most cases boggy, and next to impassable. Little clumps of timber dotted the ridges here and there, extending outwards every year, until they finally meet and form one continuous forest. But the lines of demarcation of wood and prairie are clear and distinct, it being the rarest thing in the world to see a solitary tree out in the plain by itself.

Soon a dark and sombre wood loomed upon the horizon, like the coast of some island in the tropic seas. There were bays, headlands, gulfs, and indentations of every shape and form, outlined by an almost impenetrable mass of foliage from a hundred different kinds of tree. A network of vines twined from branch to branch, and stem to stem, in a most inextricable tangle. Here and there a palm peeped out. Here and there the golden flowers of the Ivirah-pitah contrasted finely with the dark-green foliage, dotting



the face of the wood like the spots upon an African leopard skin. Right by the side of the forest we found a native 'rancho,' a tiny cottage, with red clay walls and brown thatched roof, almost hidden away amidst a shady orange grove. In the long verandah two women were busy pounding maize in a wooden mortar, keeping time to perfection with rhythmic beats of their wooden pestles. Sometimes one sees even three working together simultaneously. How they avoid cracking each other's fingers is a mystery. Judging by results, it is a most excellent exercise for the development of the arms and chest. Four little brownies, clad mostly in a state of nature, peeped out shyly from the cottage door. A thin, long-haired pig grunted disconsolately, struggling at the end of his tether in the effort to reach a windfall orange, which had dropped just beyond his reach. Presently the owner rode up—a dark man, whose coarse black hair and high cheekbones suggested some far-off affinity with Asiatic races. After the fashion of his countrymen, the 'lasso' hung carelessly in a big coil over the horse's rump. The best one can say of the steeds is that they are not quite so bad as they look. Like all the rest of the live stock, one would almost imagine there had been a special intention to allow them to become as degenerate as possible. But no. That cannot be. It would have been too much trouble.

## THE CATHEDRAL, VILLA RICA

---

The Cathedral of Villa Rica is a modern creation on a very old site, selected originally, I believe, by a devout Irish Jesuit named Thomas Field. As usual in such cases, it occupies one side of the central square, which is 'taboo' for wheel traffic, at least for people of the olden type, and every one doffs his hat on passing the porch of the House of God. Such reverence for the Higher Power is very nice, and would be still nicer if it were carried down to the appreciation of the Great Divine in the smaller things of life.

From holy associations to things mundane is but the cast of a stone to the open market-place, where hundreds of chaffering women haggle and bargain for the best roots of mandioca or the fattest chickens. For convenience of purchasers they are distributed in lines around the Plaza, sitting on the ground, with their wares displayed in little piles in front of them according to the ruling price. And the careful housewife—or mostly the servant—for the grand dames of fashion consider it *infra dig.* to be seen in the bazaar—wanders around till she finds the best value for her money. The lower-class women who do the selling puff away at their huge cigars incessantly, and appear to attain a state of good-humoured indifference, which is not in the least assumed, as to whether people buy from them or their nearest neighbour on the other side.

On Sundays, crowds of much be-ponchoed men stand around discussing politics, race-meetings, and cock-fighting; the whole thing much after the style of an open-air fair in Europe during the Middle Ages.







## CHAPTER VIII

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. II

THE camp folk practise the simple life as far as costume goes. A few yards of calico forms a woman's gown, her really glossy tresses the only bonnet. The lord and master sports a big sombrero woven from palm leaf, cotton shirt, a pair of drawers, and a leather apron around his waist. A spur of the oldish times, with rowels three or four inches in diameter, is fastened upon his brown foot. The saddle is the most idiotic combination of wood and leather a horseman ever sat upon. Even when plated in native fashion with silver trumpery it is alike uncomfortable for man and beast.

In a bush country the Paraguayan gauchos would make a very poor show; in fact, after wild cattle in the Australian bush horse and man would come to grief in the first five minutes in a hopeless smash amongst the branches. This man was a typical Paraguayan peasant. About a score of degenerate

cattle grazed on the camp in front of his house, while in a forest clearing of a couple of acres at the back, with the aid of his womenfolk, he cultivated a small supply of mandioca, maize, beans, and tobacco, representing breadstuffs, root crop, and cigars. The monkeys levied toll, mostly during the hour of siesta, taking cobs of green maize up into the tree tops to consume at their leisure. When there is any danger, they sneak in very quietly—just like any human depredator. But if the owner is discovered on the watch, the string of expletives and profanity in monkey language would, I am sure, shock the modesty of even a Cairo donkey-driver or an Andalusian muleteer. Some of the parrots are also very persistent and cunning in robbing the maize-fields. But there is nothing to equal the intelligence of the king of parrots—the beautiful Australian white cockatoo. These birds, when on mischief bent, invariably post a sentinel in a high tree near by, to give the flock warning in case of any one coming along with a gun. What compensation the sentry gets for his services, or whether this duty is taken in rotation by his other companions, no one appears to know, but the main facts are quite certain, having been observed by the writer scores of times.

One of the women suffered from the unsightly enlargement of the throat glands commonly known

as 'goitre.' This is owing to the fact that they almost invariably take their drinking water from natural springs flowing spontaneously at the edge of the forest, and usually impregnated with an excess of the salts of iron. Goitre is not uncommon in some parts of England, where it is known as 'Derbyshire neck,' also in some Alpine districts in Europe and in India. Until quite recently it was supposed that water flowing from a limestone-and-chalk formation was the cause of this deformity.

The so-called tropical diseases are rare in Paraguay. Elephantiasis, or club-foot, exists, but the writer has only seen two cases of this disease after a long residence in the country, and although mosquitoes of various kinds swarm in the 'Montes,' yet malarial fever is very infrequent and of a mild type. This, of course, might be expected in the case of people who sometimes have to go on short commons and ordinarily live upon an unirritating diet of cereals, root crops, and oranges, combined perhaps with fresh or dried meat. There is not much danger of such food setting up the inflammatory process in any of the internal organs. Many experienced travellers do not altogether believe in the mosquito theory as to the propagation of so-called malarial fever—at all events, as to the mosquito being the exclusive cause of the somewhat varied symptoms grouped under

that name by ordinary medical practitioners ; although there is no doubt but that many other diseases are disseminated by the common house-fly, and perhaps to a minor degree by the flea and mosquito.

The sequence of ideas on these subjects is rather amusing. I know people who fifteen years ago were absolutely certain that malarial fever was caused by inhaling the damp vapours arising from decaying vegetation ; a few years later, they were equally certain that the disease originated in the turning up of new soil ; then again it was proven conclusively that the germs were developed in shady banana plantations ; finally, they have fallen back upon the nearly ubiquitous mosquito. How do the holders of these theories account for the existence of intermittent fever at Aden ? one of the driest spots on earth, where there is neither malaria, decaying vegetation, mosquitoes, nor newly turned-up earth ; in fact, not a single green thing amidst the slag and cinders of that desert and volcanic region. Some facts are certain. The first is that no healthy person, with a sound liver, kept in normal state by fresh wholesome food and exercise, need bother his head about the matter. The second is that the fatty matter in potted foods is almost certain to render one susceptible to the complaint in hot climates. Thirdly, much of the



mortality and after-consequences are certainly the result of injudicious use of drugs.

The forest roads, or 'picadas,' are really leafy tunnels, shaded from sunlight by overhanging branches or trailing vines. These telescopic vistas of glistening foliage are decidedly pretty, even if there is not much variety. In the less frequented spots one sometimes sees deer or pigs crossing the path, or flocks of monkeys scampering amongst the tree tops; the gay-plumaged 'toucan' is also in evidence. This arboreal sinner is largely responsible for the paucity of bird life in South American forests; the huge beak is specially adapted for gobbling up eggs. And on many occasions I have seen them systematically going the round of other birds' nests to see if any eggs had been laid, or young birds hatched out. One day, from my forest encampment, I saw two toucans sitting upon a fallen log having a tug-of-war with the body of a young bird which they had taken out of a nest. The woodpecker bores a hole in the stem of dead trees, and is usually pretty secure; but one day I saw a pitched battle; a toucan clung to the stem at the entrance to the nest, although the woodpecker defended herself she was ultimately turned out, and the aggressor promptly popped in to get the eggs. If 'monte' birds ever have nightmare, I imagine they must dream of gigantic toucans, or long green snakes. These also have a

perfectly Satanic cunning in locating nests, if ever so well hidden.

The snakes of the country also have rather a bad time of it. In the first place, the beautiful black, red, and gold-banded coral snake—on conditions of immunity from human enmity—has vowed a vow to swallow as many baby snakes of other varieties as he can get outside of comfortably. Then the black armadillo occasionally gobbles one up for breakfast. The iguana also turns out on sunny days looking for delicate morsels, while the large brown hawk appears to dine on raw serpent seven days a week. I have often watched him swoop down amongst the grass and fly off triumphantly to his nest with a snake wriggling helplessly in his claws. Many kinds are non-venomous ; but, on the other hand, some of the worst are most formidable. The poison appears to be so exactly the reverse of that of most Australian snakes that there appears to be a possibility that the one should prove an antidote to the other. It would prove most interesting to try, at all events.

Many coloured butterflies flit about from side to side in their peculiar erratic way. They may be seen in myriads on the damp sand on the banks of creeks, presumably sucking up the moisture in the same manner as domestic bees. It is an easy matter to make beautiful collections. By a curious freak of nature,

one specimen has the number eighty-eight distinctly printed on each wing. The agouti, a small grey mammal about the size of a rabbit, and very much like a guinea-pig in form and habits, is often seen by the roadside ; when disturbed it scampers off, yelping something like a puppy.

The characteristic feature of these forests is variety. As a matter of curiosity I counted the small, medium, and larger trees on an area of a hundred yards square, and out of a total of 163 there were forty-seven different kinds. This is a great drawback to lumbermen, who, to get any quantity of any particular kind are compelled to cut long ' picadas.' The only remedy is to cut on a face, and as almost every tree yields a timber specially valuable for some one, or several kinds of work, there should be money in the business. As a case in point, orange wood is rare and valuable in Europe, while here the bitter orange abounds all over the country. On the borders of the woods where they slope down to the lower grass lands, for the first fifty yards or so we find an almost impenetrable barrier of vines and undergrowth, owing to the extra sunlight. Once fairly inside, the wood opens out, and in some montes it is even possible to pass on horseback, but usually dwarf trees and vines creeping over fallen branches make this impossible. A carpet of decaying leaves covers the ground everywhere, and, as the

sun never penetrates the foliage overhead, ferns abound. Under the banks of forest streams, huge tree-ferns ten or twelve feet high may be found. Many arboreal fruits provide sustenance for the monkeys and other animals. The guavyrah, a yellow fruit somewhat similar to a small black plum, the green mulberry, and the jacaratiyah, with some similarity to the papaw and the custard apple, are all to be seen, but the latter of a very inferior quality.

Except for the ceaseless 'whirr' of the cicadae, one is impressed with the silence and gloom of forest life, but to the woodman every sound has a meaning. The call of the wood pigeon, the mournful whistle of the blue tinamou, and the rich cooing of the currassow, are alike indicative of sylvan courtship, love, marriage, and content. The tapping of the woodpecker on the bark or stem of rotten trees as he searches for grubs—suggestive of a fairy carpenter at work in the tree-tops—is frequent. When one tree has been examined he flies to the bottom of another to begin afresh, always working upwards. The howling monkey is a master of discord, howling so much like a jaguar, that it is only by knowing the distinction in their respective habits one can tell the difference. The ringing song of a solitary brown water-hen leads one to expect to see at least a score all singing at once. How all the varied notes originate simultaneously in



that little throat is a mystery. Sounds other than these either mean the presence of intruders or tragedies. Deer never call except when seized by a jaguar, or when wounded—a last cry of mortal terror. They also make a noise between a snort and a whistle when disturbed. The peccaries also are silent except when alarmed ; they have a remarkable aptitude for making their tusks clash together in the most horrible manner suggestive of a possible chawing up to the consistency of sausage meat. Indeed, such has sometimes been the fate of an unlucky wight who has carelessly enraged a herd of the larger variety. They are very cunning fellows, neither wanting in discretion nor valour. Here and there one finds holes a yard and a half long, just big enough for piggy to back into and show a set of gleaming tusks to the enemy. This foresight is also shown by the armadillo, who provides for the possibility of hurried flight, far from his home, by making holes of refuge to run into in various places in his feeding-grounds. I am not aware that human foresight, in defensive matters, has ever gone so far. Piggy is one of the most courageous of animals. I had one tied out in the forest one night as a lure for a jaguar ; for a time he squealed disconsolately, until the roar of a jaguar was actually heard. Then he became perfectly quiet, and stood as though he were carved in stone. It must have proved a most thrilling,

unforgettable experience. The jaguar came up quite briskly at first, as though he really meant business, until within a score of yards, when he became suspicious and made a circle around; then he went away a hundred yards or so and gave us a specimen of his vocal powers; soon he glided up softly to within a few yards, but only to retire once more. He could not muster courage to spring upon his victim. This sort of thing was repeated off and on for hours, until, in disgust at my uncomfortable position in the branches, I got down and let piggy go home. I make bold to say that no human being lashed to a tree with a tiger prowling around him at night would have been so plucky. Unfortunately, the clouds and inky darkness made it impossible to see anything amongst the foliage. The eyesight of most of these animals is not to be compared to their really delicate sense of smell and hearing. With a favouring wind I have many a time allowed them to pass within a couple of yards, and they were never aware of the fact.







## ON TREK

---

Most of the peasant proprietors possess a huge high-wheeled bullock-cart and several span of oxen, which they use occasionally for the carting of timber, yerba, or other country produce to the towns in their neighbourhood, or for transport by the railway for export to the Argentine. A number of neighbours usually time their journey so as to travel together for their mutual comfort and society. The idea of the enormous wheels is to lift the body of the cart beyond the reach of the frequent mud holes in the undrained roads, as also in crossing the frequent streams, which become swollen into wild torrents after the rains. The driver sits in front of the cart and guides his oxen by means of a long bamboo swinging loose in a ring attached to the tilt of the cart. A short spike projects half an inch from the end of the pole; and if a bullock fails to respond to the sometimes rather imperative commands in Guarani, he mostly receives a gentle prod in the buttocks as a reminder to do his duty. It seems very cruel. But the Paraguayan is really a first-rate driver, and rarely punishes his animals unnecessarily. In case of need, in passing a bog, several teams are hitched on to one cart, and thus they are of material assistance to each other. On the road their cooking arrangements are of the simplest—a three-legged pot, lashed on to the pole, serves to make their 'puchero' by the roadside at night; and a stock of parched maize is usually carried as a stand-by on the road during the day. At such times, these people are wonderfully abstemious and temperate.

## CHAPTER IX

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. III

OF all the creatures in the woods the blue jay is the most assertive ; indeed, if he did not steal the farmers' eggs, upon opportunity, he might be appropriately termed the policeman of the ' montes.' He never seems so happy as when betraying the presence of some lurking animal to the hunter ; in fact, this bird has the keenest delight in routing out anything which may be in concealment, be it a hawk, an owl, a deer, a fox, a snake, or a jaguar. Once a single bird discovers his hiding-place, then begins a period of torment, ended only by ignominious flight. A warning cry is passed from tree to tree, and in a few minutes every jay in the neighbourhood responds to the call, and promptly assembles to gaze at the monstrosity. If their screeching is anything like as insulting as their gestures, there cannot be much doubt as to the import of it all. Every malediction is accompanied by an exasperating jerk of the tail, alternated every now and then by

a furious stamping upon the branch and a string of imprecations, which I am afraid would not bear translation. The black 'acaye' also always turns up on these occasions to have a swear at the offender, but is not so persistent as the jay. I played a mean trick on these bird folk once. Having carefully hidden away the stuffed skin of a dead fox in a secluded place, I awaited results with some curiosity. During the next few days all the jays within twenty leagues must either have died of apoplectic fits or have gone away in disgust with sore throats. The matter only ended by a vulture scenting out the decaying skin and making a meal of it, that being one of the incidents enabling one to settle the controversy as to whether the vulture is guided by sight or smell. No doubt their sight is wonderful, but I have frequently tested the matter by placing the carcasses of animals in such a position that discovery except by smell, after decomposition had set in, would be impossible. In fact, I have seen a score of these birds—off and on for days—swooping about in hopeless bewilderment trying to discover the decomposing bodies of a couple of dead cats which had been thrown into a deep, disused well.

The jays have sometimes enthusiastic supporters in the shape of a troop of monkeys, particularly in the case of a jaguar being found. The larger males scramble audaciously down the branches or vines,

and make pretence of attacking, grimacing, and showing their teeth as though they meant to chew him up. Loose pieces of bark or rotten branches are pushed off in the hope that they might fall near him and rout him out. The Indians say that they deliberately throw offensive matter. This is somewhat of an exaggeration, but it is certainly dropped with the best intentions by the black howler. Why, by the way, should the male of this species be black and the female reddish brown? The monkey has certainly strong reasoning powers, but, like some bipeds, appears to have a very considerable blank in his moral perceptions in the case of the eighth commandment; and any one who has ever watched a troop systematically and intelligently waiting for a safe opportunity to raid a cornfield during a wet day, or when everybody is likely to be asleep, taking no end of trouble to secure a noiseless entry into the plantation, only to find the owner watching with a gun, and who has heard the angry expletives of the same crowd of disappointed monkeys making a hasty retreat, must come to the conclusion that a weakness for profanity and a similar vacuity in their moral perceptions, in the case of the ninth commandment, is also to be imputed to them.

The only really cheerful part of a tropical forest is the top. I have many times climbed to the highest branch of one of the tallest trees and leisurely enjoyed



the prospect. To the eye, it looks quite feasible to pass from tree to tree, monkey fashion. The branches are all hidden away beneath masses of foliage and creeping vines, the contour being very much the same as the outline of a 'choppy' sea, waves and hollows, pillars and mountains stretching away as far as the eye can reach. This is the veritable home of the butterfly, who flits about in erratic idleness, with no apparent object in the least evident to a mere biped, only descending occasionally to the lower world in search of shade or moisture. In such places one longs for a pair of wings, a flying-machine, or even the jumping power of one of our monkey cousins. The contrast is so very striking. Beneath, silence, gloom, humidity, decaying vegetation and mosquitoes; above, light, sunshine, flowers, and a sea of verdure rippled continually by the wind. Many people, even scientists, speak somewhat vaguely of plants and animals developing to their fullest potentiality in a state of nature. Most people would assume that trees growing in a primaeval forest should be perfect specimens of their class. Such is not the fact, owing to the crowding of space. Each and all try to lift their heads above their fellows in the effort to reach light, air, and sunshine. As a consequence the stems are slim, with comparatively few branches and little foliage. Any of these same trees planted out in the open takes quite a

different form ; the trunks grow short and thick, while huge branches spread out all around shading the ground for yards with their foliage.

If anything in plant life indicates intention, and inferentially the existence of a Creator, it is the habits of our forest creepers. Some, at every section, throw out sensitive feelers, which twine around any branch or stem which comes within their reach, thus supporting the parent plant in its progress upward. Another class coil in spiral fashion about the trunk and branches of the nearest tree, only spreading out when they reach the top. Yet another roots itself to the bark as it goes along, thus securing its position ; but most wonderful of all is the graceful pussy-cat creeper, which at every joint throws out a tiny feeler with three toes and claws for all the world like a cat ; in this manner climbing to the top of the highest tree by merely fixing its claws in the bark in like fashion to any living animal. The fig reverses this process ; a seed germinates in some hollow space between the branches or in the bark ; the roots twine around the trunk—'downwards'—in the course of time completely enveloping the original stem and strangling it to death. The fig branches do the same thing with the larger limbs, until eventually the parasite has become a tree itself—at the cost of the life of one of its fellows.

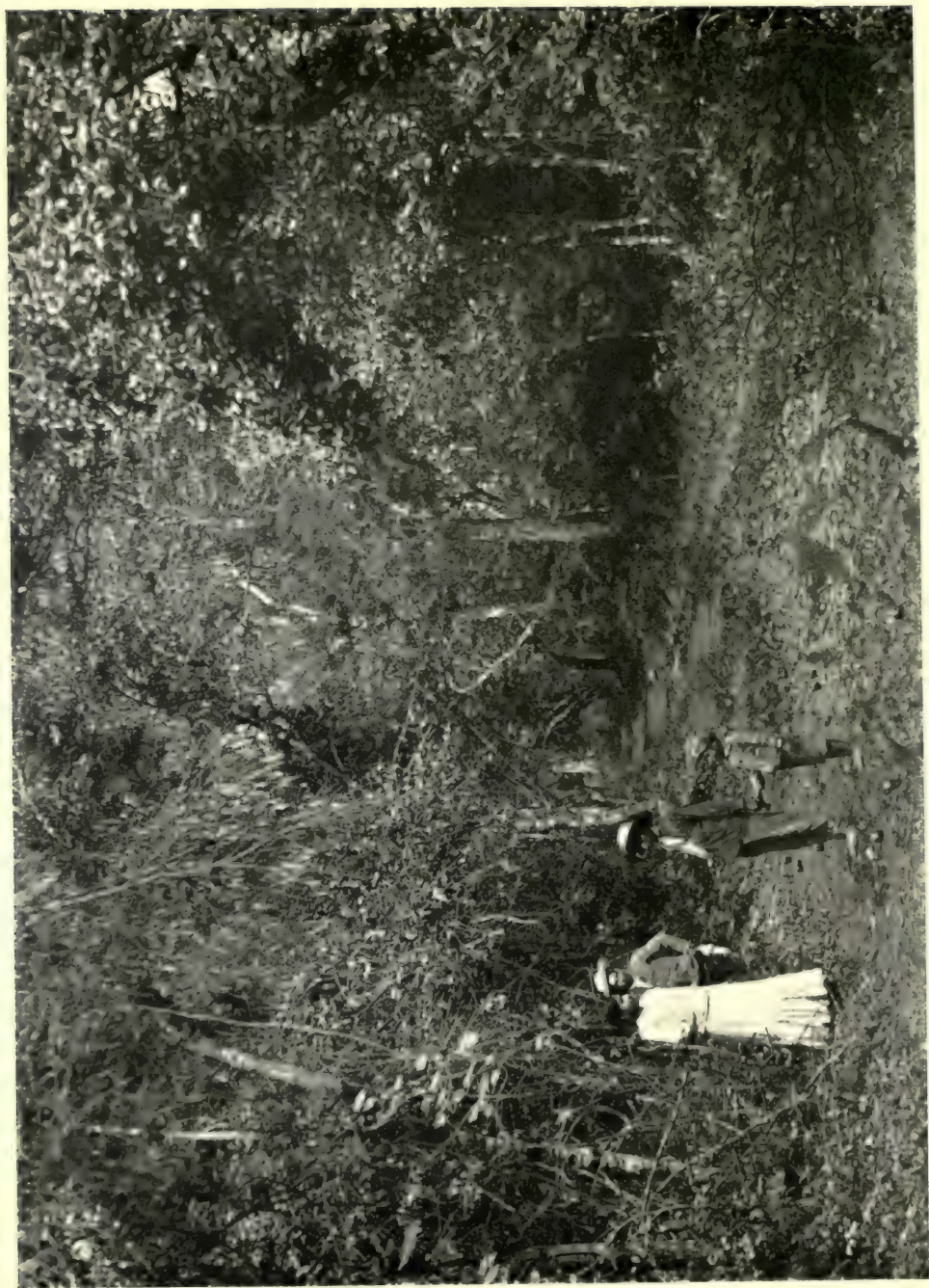
In felling these trees the original trunk is often found in the centre. The tenacity of life in some of these forest giants is remarkable. Some of them shoot up persistently, time after time, no matter how often chopped down ; but the curious part of the business is that any naturally thorny tree, after being cut down, sends up new branches infinitely more thorny than the original, as if in protest at their treatment. Stranger still, the white mulberry—a fairly large forest tree, with beautiful golden timber—which in its normal state has no thorns of any kind, after being felled, develops a fresh growth literally bristling with long hard spikes. Another variety of the tree with its bark studded with short prickles has also thorns on the inner side of the leaves as well, circumstances which are apt to cause profanity in the barefooted wanderer who passes underneath, and treads unwittingly upon the dead leaves. I presume that evolutionists would explain the existence of horrid thorns upon the stems and fronds of the coco palm as being necessary as a protection for the bunches of edible fruit ; certainly no sane monkey or biped would ever think of climbing one of these plants ; but in similar localities in many parts of the country we also find the Pindoh palm, with equally tasty nuts, quite unprotected by thorns of any kind. It is well known that thorny trees are the rule in dry countries ;

is it owing to the fact that the tender leaves are being constantly cropped by giraffes, antelopes, camels, &c.? One curious example of vegetable life which I have observed in this country was a stump which had covered its wound with new bark and thus remained in a state of suspended animation without shoots or leaves of any kind.









## A FOREST 'PICADA'

---

The forest roads of Paraguay are really long tunnels lined with thick foliage and luxuriant creepers often meeting overhead amidst the branches. Ferns and undergrowth fill up the sides of the path, and only constant traffic prevents the exuberant vegetation of the tropics from claiming its own again. The wild animals are all hidden away in the silence of the forest, and rarely cross a path used by human beings in the daytime, except, perhaps, an inquisitive agouti, who squats quietly by the side of the road until the last moment and then startles the wayfarer by suddenly dashing into the brushwood, barking like a puppy, to show his appreciation of the joke he has played off upon a stupid biped. A blue monte partridge is occasionally seen out for an airing. Now and again a herd of pigs streak across the path like a lot of ugly spectres from the realms of Hades. Bird life is mostly conspicuous by its absence except, perhaps, the woodpecker, leisurely putting in his time as inspector of forests and seeking the grubs hiding away beneath the bark or in the rotten wood of old trees. Toucans—as great wanderers—may be seen almost anywhere. In this illustration we have the entrance to a 'Picada' where it opens out on to the prairie, the forest standing out like a great wall, as though the spirit of the woods had commanded 'Thus far shalt thou come and no farther.' The insignificance of man in these primeval woods is shown by the figures of country people posing for their photos amongst their native woods.

## CHAPTER X

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. IV

WE travelled our first 'Monte' by means of a long 'picada,' a winding forest road, leading to the camps beyond. Masses of foliage, ferns, and luxuriant creepers, made a perfect screen on either side. Huge tree ferns peeped out here and there, and detours were rendered necessary now and then to avoid the mossy trunks of fallen trees. The larger branches, linked together, overhead, by vines innumerable, formed a natural archway, impenetrable to the scorching rays of tropic sunshine. A rough wooden cross by the roadside indicated the last resting-place of some poor beggar—who had been waylaid and assassinated for his money—or for the gratification of some personal animosity; a bunch of flowers upon the grave showed that his memory was still held sacred by some of those he left behind. Everywhere the golden fruit of the bitter orange looked irresistibly tempting, if one were not aware that the intense acidity of its juice made it



quite uneatable. There are two varieties ; the one as sour as any lemon, the other a kind of bittersweet. There is considerable reason to believe that they are indigenous to the country. It is hardly probable that, in the short period of three hundred years or so, the plant could have been so widely distributed amongst these solitudes. It is true that monkeys eat the skins, while deer, parrots, and the curassow, on opportunity, feed upon the seeds. But all of these creatures and many others are naturally very much keener upon the consumption of the fruit of the sweet orange. Yet up to the present the tree is rarely seen growing beyond the range settlement, except in parts of the Caaguassu and Bella Vista districts.

Disturbed by the noise of our ox-cart, a white-collared peccary crossed into the middle of the path, where he stood perfectly still for a moment, watching us warily out of one eye as though posing for a photograph. Then with a snort of disdain, he bounded into the brushwood. In districts where the game is worried by native hunters, this smaller variety of pig is only found in herds of from six to ten.

We passed a party of 'yerbateros,' returning from the woods with sacks of yerba packed upon a score of miserable-looking horses. After a slight detour, the forest 'picada' opened out upon a narrow inlet of open prairie. Then a long expanse of grassy camp

lands, island 'montes,' and distant woods, spread out on every side as far as the eye could reach. In the midst, a winding strip of low timber outlined the course of the nearest river. These low flats are most exasperating. In the distance, they appear to be perfectly lovely—as indeed they are—to look upon; but the moment one attempts to cross from one point to another, it is mostly a case of floundering amongst a hateful succession of tiny hillocks, clumps of bunch grass, and little clay pot-holes of rain water, alternating now and again—on lands subject to inundation—with perfect jungles of reeds and swamp grass. I shall never forget the experience—in such a place—or wading through a black, slimy, evil-smelling 'riacho,' in the enthusiasm of the chase, after a wounded deer. In most cases the intelligent use of plough or scoop would drain these lands at insignificant expense. The trouble is that the rank vegetation frequently obstructs small water-courses, causing them to spread out and get lost, thus forming a swamp or 'estero.' The accumulation of water soon re-forms into a stream once more, which again and again is lost in the plains, until eventually there is a sufficient body of water to force its way past all obstacles.

Our river proved to be a muddy, rapid flowing stream, with deep perpendicular banks cut out by the rush of water in flood time. After a succession of



STREET IN ASUNCION





heavy rains, the waters spread out for half a league on either side. These flat country rivers are anything but lovable. The water is seldom clear and transparent, and myriads of mosquitoes take refuge in the bamboo thickets and fringe of wood usually lining the banks; while all the camps subject to inundation, for at least half the year, are infested by several species of gad-fly.

Yet another day's journey through forest cuttings, rolling camps, or skirting around the borders of esteros, took us beyond the range of settlement, and well in towards the game country. The almost human cry of some night bird, starting with a very high note, and running down the scale, seemed as though the fairies of the wood or departed souls of dead Indians were tuning their voices for some ghostly concert. Some curassows, awakened by the moonlight, took turn and turn about in serenading their companions upon a different tree. For the first time we heard the roar of a jaguar on the prowl in quest of stray piggies or unwary deer.

Next morning, being now compelled to eke out our supplies by the produce of the chase, I went in search of game. The first sign was the partially devoured carcase of a camp deer, who had carelessly approached the edge of the wood, whence his enemy had pounced upon him. The long grass made it difficult to get a

sight of anything ; but from time to time I scrambled up a tree on the borders of the ' monte ' to get a more extended view. Perseverance in these methods had its reward. In the far distance a red camp deer, evidently disturbed by the flies, got up from its lair and wandered off northwards in the effort to get rid of his tormentors. Taking a sharp run of a few hundred yards, I managed to head him off without being perceived. Then, with a favouring wind I carefully worked back to meet him. For some time there was nothing to be seen. The animal appeared to have vanished into thin air ; till at last, creeping noiselessly onwards, I actually found him sleeping peacefully right in front of me, with head thrown back over his shoulders. As an old hunter I could not help feeling pleased at this successful result of a long stalk, yet for a moment I did feel decidedly mean to shoot any creature under those circumstances. It was a painless death anyway, for a bullet through the neck severed the spinal vertebrae, and the stag passed to his long rest without even a quiver. This class of deer has fairly decent antlers. Amateur naturalists might amuse themselves in getting a solution of the problem as to whether he originally took to the open prairie because his antlers must often get entangled in the vines and brushwood of the forests, or if the constant exposure to light and sunshine may not have caused

his head-gear to spread out. All varieties of 'monte' deer are beautifully formed with slender limbs, tiny little hooves, and a striking similarity to the appearance of bush antelopes, differing merely in the fact that the short spikes of the former are solid, while the horns of the antelope are hollow with a central pith like our domestic cattle. These external affinities carry an astonishing corresponding likeness in habits. Away in Africa—just previous to the breaking of a thunderstorm—it is a treat to see the graceful antics of the bush antelopes as they frisk around in sportive gambols.

Here in South America likewise, when the thunder rolls and the first big rain drops splash amongst the leaves, every forest deer gets up from his lair, forgetting his habitual caution, and scampers around in happy anticipation of the coming storm. The Fates appear to be against us this year in travelling. After two phenomenally dry seasons the change has come at last; and almost every other day the rain falls in torrents. Every creek has become a river, and every river a consuming deluge. These circumstances involve inevitable delay in carrying out the original programme.

## RAFT ON THE TEBICUARY-MI

---

Our scene depicts the ordinary method of floating timber down the Tebicuary-mi on its way to Villa Del Pilar for export to the Argentine. The history of a log of cedar from the time it has been felled in the wilds of Paraguay, until it is finally transformed into table tops in London or New York, is quite a romance. Half-naked woodsmen cut long 'picadas' to reach their tree, square the sides in the most laborious method with their clumsy axes in order to make it lighter for the wooden axles of their antediluvian cart, finally conveying it to the nearest river by means of bullock teams. At this stage the river man takes charge to gather the scattered logs and form a raft. To pilot his unwieldy craft down the great river is anything but a picnic. Mosquitoes are in their own peculiar domain on the water frontages and, except during the heat of the day, make things lively for the voyager. The raft must be guided by poles around the frequent bends of the stream, and shoals obstruct the navigation of these streams except in flood time. If he had a camera, he might snapshot alligators innumerable, carpinchos, deer coming down to drink, and sometimes even a jaguar, who loves the banks of the rivers frequented most by his favourite game the carpincho or water hog. The raftsmen generally has a gun and a couple of hunting dogs, so that, when an opportunity offers, he ties his craft up to a tree and takes tithe of fur and feather to compensate for his hardships and does a bit of pot hunting by way of recreation.







## CHAPTER XI

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. V

IN these Paraguayan forests, to get really good sport, the chase must be reduced to a fine art. The game is of a shy and retiring disposition, and mostly nocturnal in its habits. Still, it is possible to some degree at all events, to attain the secret of getting in harmony with nature. One may dispense with all useless encumbrances in the way of boots and head-gear and glide noiselessly over the fallen leaves, like an Indian on the warpath, seeing everything, and yet, to all outward appearances, seeming to see nothing. A knowledge of woodcraft enables one to read all the signs of the day. Leaves freshly turned by passing footsteps; the lay of grass or broken twigs; the twittering of birds or chatter of our monkey cousins, are all so many pages out of Nature's notebook. The pleasure comes in with the uncertainty of what may happen next. It may be the instinct of *primaeval* man; anyway, it is good sometimes to be alone, to

pit your human brains and courage against the cunning and ferocity of wild animals. Moreover, as an education the solitudes of Nature have a decidedly wholesome and salutary effect, alike upon mind and body. One is called upon to endure physical suffering silently ; to repress one's feelings ; to observe one's surroundings closely, and to draw deductions therefrom ; to act promptly, and sometimes to face personal danger. The highly strung tension of a day in the woods is one of the best exercises possible. Many rich people recognize the fact, and if the poor were only able to take advantage of it, we should hear less of people going wrong. In Germany, the idea of open-air schools is gaining ground. The attraction of a hunter's life, then, is not the mere gratification of a brutal instinct to go out and kill something, but the keen delight of getting in touch with the world of Nature, and freedom from the restraints and conventionalities which hedge us around from the cradle to the grave. In fact, the best sportsmen rarely take life, except under compulsion, or in the necessary destruction of noxious animals.

At the present time the rains are almost continuous, and there is no comfort in getting about. The ' montes ' are all wet and dripping ; most of the animals rather like it, however, and wander about more freely beyond their usual range. I often meet herds of pigs marching



along in Indian file, and sometimes surprise them in the act of foraging for roots, or eating the fruit which the wasteful monkeys have shaken down. When a flock of monkeys are about it is always good business to keep a sharp look out for piggy. When irritated, the odour of his musk gland is more penetrative than pleasant ; and, working against the wind, one often gets a sniff to indicate his presence. Straggling members of the herd are enabled by this peculiarity to rejoin their companions, in thick undergrowth, where they would otherwise get lost. All animals leave their own peculiar scent ; and, although the faculty has been pretty well lost by human beings, an open-air life and constant practice enable one sometimes to take advantage of it.

When out purely for pleasure, it is best to resist the temptation to shoot until one is on the return homewards, on account of the inconvenience of carrying the game long distances. The other day I secured two peccaries. I caught a glimpse of one in a tangle of vines and bush. The shot raised a perfect pandemonium of gnashing tusks and snorting furies. I was compelled to shoot another to save my shins from another angry demon. The rest drew off without seeing where the shots came from ; and I could hear the horrible clashing of their tusks as they retreated towards another part of the forest. Query for budding naturalists : How

did the peccary lose his tail? Perhaps the caudal appendage proved a superfluity for backing into hollow logs or holes in the earth.

In the backwoods the number of snakes is surprisingly small. Indeed, in most cases they can only be said to be numerous in settled districts, where the people have been so foolish as to destroy the birds and animals which ordinarily keep these reptiles in check. In connexion with this subject I am tempted to tell a good story, illustrating that eccentric heroism of which we Britons are so proud. A certain Englishman in Colonia Cosme, Central Paraguay—a disciple of that strange Anglo-Hindu faith which regards ‘all’ life as being sacred—seeing a number of boys pelting a snake which had fallen into a well, promptly descended and rescued his snake-ship from the impending dangers of a broken back and a watery grave. It was indeed a very big thing, although quite regardless of the fact that if the race desire to maintain their existence on this planet life must be one continual battle between the forces which are in our favour and those which are against us. One cannot take a drink of water or inhale a breath of air without destroying myriads of God’s creatures. There is, of course, no excuse for wanton cruelty. Personally, I have always had a very clear conception of the beauties of Hinduism ; but, on the

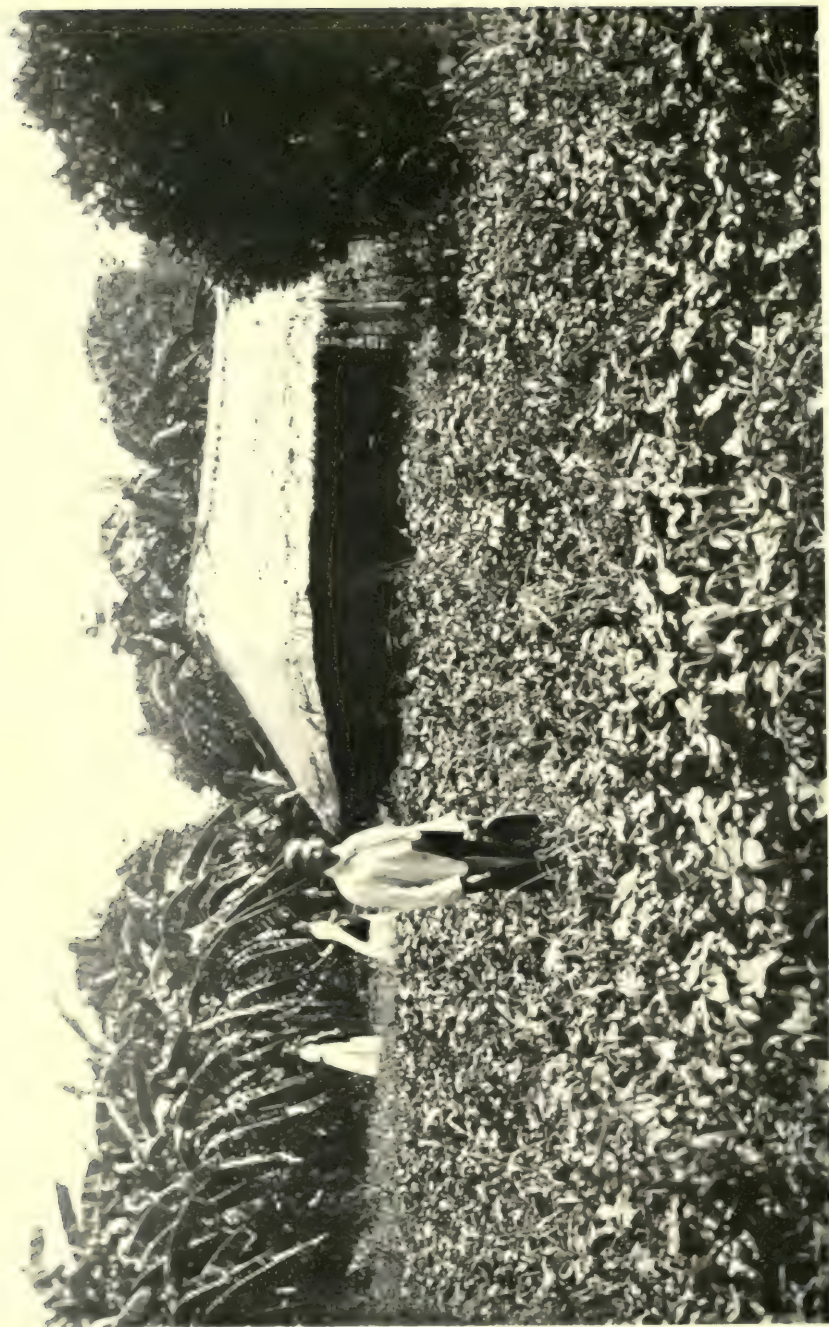
other hand, I must confess that the horrors of mosquitoes, sandflies, ticks, tapeworm, and all the nameless microbes to which flesh is heir, have been quite too much for my philosophy. Secondarily, as our ancestors have been omniverous for thousands of generations, I am afraid that a certain proportion of animal food, or at least animal products, is an indispensable adjunct to our diet.

At this time of year the nights are often hot, humid, and sultry, and the atmosphere highly charged with electricity. Mosquitoes and sandflies literally make things hum during the short twilight till the last rays of the setting sun have merged into inky darkness. Then the spirits of the wood begin to flit around, like erratic stars, seeking their final destiny. Has any one ever explained the nature of the light of these fire-beetles, less sparkling, perhaps, but purer and more brilliant than the electric light itself? To say that it is phosphorescent is sheer moonshine. It is quite under control of the will power, being produced or turned off at any time as the insect may desire. The largest variety displays a light in each side of the head, almost as large as a tiny pea, and, when flying, another rather larger in front of the body. Perhaps, more curious still is the appearance of a small nocturnal worm, with a row of varied lights, red, blue, green, and white, on either side, for all

the world like the port-holes of a ship, passing by night at sea. But strangest of all is the somewhat rare chameleon grub, which, under normal conditions, crawls around with a head which can only be compared to the appearance of a hot, glowing coal. The moment the creature is startled, by brushing one's hand near it for example, the whole body is instantly illuminated with a dark 'green' light. This wonderful power must be invaluable for protective purposes, it being hard to imagine any creature having the hardihood to place such an animated fiery furnace in its stomach. By placing a dozen of the large fire-beetles in a transparent globe, one may improvise a light for reading or writing. I have heard strange stories from old woodsmen of a bird with phosphorescent feathers. It is probably on a parity with the story of rats which develop wings and are transformed into bats in their old age, or the chrysalis of the humming-bird moth which they imagine is merely the humming-bird itself in a state of transition. The actual similarity of insect and bird in form, habits, and colour, is rather striking. The one visits the flowers by day, the other by night.







## **DON MIGUEL FARIA, A HERO OF THE WAR**

---

The subject of this notice—Don Miguel Faria of Villa Rica—appeared as one of the characters in the 'Monkey-land Sketches' under the fictitious name of Don Sebastiano. There being now no object for concealment, the author is glad to present him as one of the fine old type of Paraguayans, alas, now nearly extinct. Old in years, but yet young in heart, he appears to have a constant succession of olive branches coming to bless him every year in his old age. During the war he was glad to subsist as he could upon palm kernels, bitter oranges, stray cats, raw bullock's hides, or anything edible which came his way. Here he stands up to his knees amongst sweet potato vines, passing his days in a land of milk and honey. His little cottage lies hidden away amidst orange-trees and banana-groves, while some hundreds of cattle carry his brand away out on a Northern prairie. The spirit of adventure is still strong upon him, for every few months he 'treks' out with his two big 'prairie schooners' for 'yerba,' or doing transport work to earn a bit of pocket-money. Men of his type, even if rich, cannot sit down and live quietly upon their assured income. They are really wiser than they know, for the only way to remain young is to live as though we really are young. Many of us might with advantage take hints from the life of the Paraguayan cottager, that is, in the way of a certain legitimate simplification of life—derived firsthand from the soil—without going to the extreme of slovenliness, lack of refinement, or empty-headed idleness.

## CHAPTER XII

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. VI

THE Jesuits certainly did good work in Paraguay in the olden days, converting the wandering Indians into peaceful agriculturists. Their success, indeed, involved their ultimate downfall; but, viewed in the light of subsequent history, one can't help regretting that a false conception of the scope of religion prevented the order from resisting the decrees of expulsion and taking up the sword for the protection of their people against the wolves which afterwards devastated the country. After Paraguay secured its independence, much may be said in favour of the first dictatorships of Francia and Lopez. Life and property were at least secure, if not confiscated by the Dictator himself. This somewhat beneficent if despotic rule degenerated into the worst form of tyranny with the succession of the younger Lopez. This ruler must surely have been a reincarnation of that contemptible creature Nero who crowned a career of infamy by setting



Rome on fire for the fun of seeing it burn, and died like a selfish cur, bemoaning his hard fate with the words, 'Oh what an artist the world loses in me!'

I have received much interesting information from people who took part in the historic drama of the seven years' war, when the male population of the Republic was practically wiped out of existence by the sword, famine, and pestilence, leaving only boys under ten years of age or very old men too decrepit to bear arms.

My 'carretero,' Don Miguel Faria, has charmed away many an idle hour recounting the story of his adventures by flood and field. He is a real good fellow, fairly well-to-do, and still in the prime of life, with a large family ranging from the twenties down to infantile prattlers. Some of his boys are being educated in the National School. When the war began he was but seven years of age. In his district, year after year, drafts of men and boys were sent away to the front, none of whom ever returned to their homes. The boy must surely have had some of the old Crusaders' blood in his veins, as he longed for the day when he also might be old enough to go to the wars. At the age of twelve he ran away from home and contrived to smuggle himself into the camp amongst a squad of recruits. When under inspection he squared his shoulders, inflated his chest, and stood on tip-toe to

appear taller, in order that he might not be rejected as being too small. Anything more pathetic I have never heard. The very same night, although not on duty, he was flogged for going to sleep before the hour fixed for the camp. The boy was first drafted into the artillery. The first exciting event was the defence of the Abahi crossing. The fight had raged for some hours before his battery came upon the scene. He was puzzled to account for the appearance of the bridges. It seemed to his boyish eyes that they were piled up with billets of firewood. He asked his officer what on earth it was ; the reply was that he would find out soon enough. Getting nearer, it was plain that the bridges were piled with human bodies. Some even hung over the sides, held in that position by others who had fallen across their feet. The battle lasted a whole day. Time after time the Brazilian cavalry charged until the bridges were blocked by the slain ; horses and men were piled in heaps.

They then tried to cross the Arroyo. The men jumped their horses over the banks into the bed of the stream, but, unable to get out on the other side, were easily slain by the defenders. The invaders were finally repulsed, but not before nearly all the Paraguayan troops engaged were either killed or wounded in the defence. In the retreat northwards the men had a terrible time. Although weakened by starvation, no

straggling was permitted. If a man fell from exhaustion he was flogged. If this treatment did not have the desired effect, the poor beggar was thrust through and left to die like a dog. Passing the low-lying trackless 'esteros,' they hopped from tussock to tussock to avoid the pot-holes of water. Men marched on until they dropped. Some would be seen apparently sitting down with the rifle still over their shoulders, and a glance at their eyes showed that they were stone dead; others lay back against tussocks as though merely resting for a moment, so highly strung with fear of being put to the sword by their own officers, they remained erect to the last gasp.

Don Miguel in the artillery had even a worse time of it. The cavalry were cavalry no longer. Their horses were all dead from ill-usage or eaten; the bullocks of the artillery shared the same fate. Long files of men were hitched on to the guns to drag them along as best they could. Often the roads were slippery, and afforded but an insecure foothold to the struggling gunners. At such times the Colonel raved and swore like an avenging demon; he would gallop up one side and down the other, slapping every man on the back with the flat of his sword. The men had the choice of starvation or eating anything that came along. They eked out a precarious subsistence by eating bitter oranges, palm nuts, and the starch

obtained from the pith of the palm-tree. One red-letter day they found an old broken-down mule, and promptly converted that animal into particles of some hundreds of bipeds. On another occasion a stray donkey shared the same fate. Miguel says he did not eat dog or horse-flesh—for the simple reason that he never got the chance—but one day he came across two unwary cats, and, without waiting to thank Providence for his luck, straightway knocked them on the head with a stick. He scalded them with hot water, scraped the hair off, and gave them a bit of a boil—in their skins. He says that cat's flesh is delicious. Strange to say, most people who have tried the dainty morsel pass this verdict. I have heard of pussy being served up as hare without the fraud being detected. Now and again they came upon an orange grove, and although the fruit was quite small and green they left the trees as bare as if they had been a swarm of locusts. During the progress of the campaign, as men became scarce, women were drafted into the ranks to make a show of strength. Sometimes also, when a man or boy broke down, his wife, mother, or sister would beg to take his place in carrying his arms and accoutrements. If in head quarters the rankest devilry was the rule rather than the exception, the common people displayed heroism and abnegation of no common kind.



Military executions at the caprice of the tyrant were of daily occurrence. Don Miguel saw all his officers and chaplain stripped of their uniforms and shot by a firing party. At San Joaquin, Lopez had all his escort shot for some imaginary offence. The remnants of the treasure, collected by a one-man government during close upon a century, were carried off with the army; very little fell into the hands of the enemy. One cart-load of specie was thrown into the swirling waters of a certain tributary of the Rio Paraguay, the rest was interred here and there in the recesses of primæval forests. The men who dug the holes were shot, and their bodies thrown in on top of the money-boxes to guard the treasure; and to this day, Paraguayan woodmen are terrified by their imaginary ghosts. The escorts were also got rid of on the principle that dead men tell no tales. Finally, with one exception, the secret of these hiding-places perished with the death of the tyrant himself at Cerro Cora in the far north. One officer, who was said to be in favour with Madame Lynch, recovered part of these treasures, and even now has a big balance in his favour in the Bank of England.

Later on I hope to be able to give more details of these interesting incidents of the last stages of the war. After the final dispersal of the Paraguayan army, Don Miguel and a companion wandered for months in

the woods, fearing to give themselves up to the Brazilians, as they imagined that they would be shot on sight. They lived all this time as best they could on wild-fruit, roots, and fish; and on one occasion, finding some dried hide in a deserted rancho, they devoured it with as much gusto as though it were a juicy beefsteak. Finally, however, they gave themselves up, were well treated, and sent down to Asuncion. In the meantime the grass and weeds had grown up in the streets of the country towns. Many of the jaguars had become 'man-eaters,' and fearlessly sought their prey in the very towns. Even yet the man-eating jaguar has not become extinct; and there are frequent cases of native hunters coming to grief hunting these animals.

My heart warmed to Don Miguel as he told his story. I cannot imagine anything finer than the case of this twelve-year-old boy standing on tip-toe to add an inch or so to his stature so as to pass the recruiting-officers. The best of Europeans sometimes do these things as a matter of course; and I have often known Arabs and North Africans display heroism to a fault, but the nearest comparison I can make is the case of an Arab boy of the same age, who, quite alone, armed with a simple lance, charged the whole Egyptian army in the Eastern Soudan during the early part of the eighties. The horrors of the

Paraguayan war, I am afraid, have to a great extent demoralized the survivors, and I very much doubt if their modern descendants would display equal courage and heroism in such a case—certainly not during times of revolution—perhaps because they are not interested, every one hides away in the woods. The subsequent admixture of foreign blood has not been all that it might have been; and I am afraid their clergy have been very remiss in not teaching that, amongst other things, the ultimate survival of a nation is largely dependent upon its ideals of honour and honesty. Sad to say, Paraguay is one of the countries where, if you wish to deceive people, it is only necessary to tell the simple truth. For no one would believe you to be guilty of such Quixotic simplicity if your interests were opposed.



## CHAPTER XIII

### RAMBLINGS IN MONKEY-LAND. VII

I AM afraid these sketches must end in a rather unsatisfactory manner, a phenomenally wet season in the north having taken up nearly all the time available, and the writer is now called to other duties and pleasure. Needless to say, the certain amount of poetical licence which—for more or less obvious reasons—was craved in the first publication of these articles was only taken advantage of to the extent of temporarily substituting fictitious names for one or two persons and places. The description of life in the woods is the result of days and nights, months and years, spent in these solitudes. Inspired by a love of nature rather than the idea to go out and kill something, I have slept out night after night in remote spots, where footsteps of the genus biped rarely cross. Under such circumstances I have been interviewed by foxes, wolves, deer, tapirs, monkeys, and jaguars—the last, I presume, with an eye to business. I was



peacefully sleeping in a tree-platform one very dark night when I heard one of these nocturnal prowlers march up quite boldly, his pads breaking twigs and rustling the dark leaves. Probably he thought I was some new kind of monkey. Anyway, he danced the devil's polka underneath my resting-place in the endeavour to get a taste. Even a hastily improvised flare-up did not scare the sinner, only appearing to make him more excited. A random shot in the dark settled the business.

After this experience, I felt more inclined to credit the descriptions given by the natives of the animal's ferocity. Probably the old man-eating instincts, developed during the war, have not yet died out.

Fatal accidents are of frequent occurrence amongst native hunters. The usual process is to tree the quarry with a pack of yelping dogs, and shoot Mr. Spots from a branch, like a 'possum.' These chaps sometimes get the 'shakes,' and only wound the creature. In such cases he springs down—and there is a lively quarter of an hour for all parties.

I know an instance of two men being killed by a jaguar in this manner. There has been another instance quite recently. A scion of the old English nobility was getting his hand in for forest shooting up this way for some time. One day his peon encountered a jaguar in his master's absence and managed to wound

it; but the enraged animal sprang upon the poor fellow and sent him to the happy hunting-grounds. From the African lion down to the ordinary leopard there is no danger in hunting these big cats if only one keeps cool, and shoots moderately straight. It is curious the different manner in which danger reacts upon diverse temperaments. Some of the bravest men in the world get excited at such times, and often shoot wide of the mark; with others, who are often but indifferent shots at an inanimate target, it appears to produce quite the opposite result. They become cool and methodical in their actions, and shoot with the unerring accuracy of one of Buffalo Bill's cowboys at a circus; such men mostly die in their beds after hairbreadth escapes by flood and field.

Paraguay's big pussy-cat is an exasperating sinner. It is hardly possible to walk him up in a sportsmanlike way; he likes to choose his own time for an interview. I walked one fellow off a pig freshly killed on which he was making a meal, and he slunk off like the cur he was, in thick undergrowth without showing fight. Even a domestic pussy is inclined to scratch before giving up a mouse. I should have got this fellow asleep at the same spot the next morning, but a troop of monkeys spied me out and gave the show away by howling blue murder. After a patient

crawl of half a mile this was enough to aggravate a saint. The feline woke up in a very bad temper, but again sneaked off without showing his claws. Being determined to give him a good chance, I swung a hammock near by, and passed a day and a night amongst the creatures of the woods. Deer wandered by, picking tit-bits here and there amongst the undergrowth, ghost-like in their silence ; armadillos turned up the leaves and rubbish in search of grubs and beetles, while one or two small herds of peccaries streaked past in single file in the darkness, looking like pictures of hobgoblins sometimes begotten of the hallucinations resulting from dining not wisely but too well. This piggy has too much head and not enough tail to be considered handsome. In spite of patience which deserved a better reward, this jaguar seemed to think the neighbourhood had suddenly become unhealthy, and I found by following up the tracks that he had gone to drink at another water more than a league away. So that time, at least, he lost his bacon and saved his bones ; but I am afraid he did not rest well for a long time if he had any idea of the feelings which his line of conduct inspired.

Sometimes the jaguar, like his kingly cousin, the African lion, will carry people off. I know of one case where he sprang inside the line of fire at a forest encampment, and carried off a poor miserable woman.

When obtainable, his favourite prey is the 'carpincho,' which abounds near all the watercourses. In other parts he systematically stalks pigs, forest deer, and even the prairie deer often falls a victim to his wiles. In different parts of South America, he appears to vary much in his habits, in some places even condescending to be a patient fisherman, lying stretched out on an overhanging branch for hours until an unwary fish comes to the surface within reach of his paw. Their favourite spots to bring up their young are in the bamboo thickets by the banks of some watercourse. When fully grown, they wander far, but keep to favourite beats, working back and forwards systematically. In some districts they blackmail cattle raisers to some extent, killing off the young animals whenever they approach the woods. The great ant-bear is able to hold his own with the jaguar, and the skeletons of both animals are sometimes found enlaced in death after a mortal struggle. This ant-eater is slow, but his claws and legs—adapted to the breaking-up of ant-heaps—are extraordinarily powerful for an animal of his size. He is quite harmless unless molested, but never condescends to run away from anything. By right these creatures should be protected by law.

Our North American cousins tell us tall stories of their floods and forest fires. In the way of wind-



storms, however, I fancy the southern half of the continent can sometimes give them a lead. One night, a couple of years ago, the spirits of the woods in Matto Grosso must have been out on the loose—perhaps it was Mafeking night. Anyway, they had a lively dance for a quarter of an hour. The trees of the woods are all securely lashed branch to branch and trunk to trunk by vines often thicker than a man's arm. In spite of all nature's ingenuity, in the path of this cyclone for a hundred yards or so wide most of the trees, branches, vines, and foliage were hurled to the ground in one inextricable tangle, a few bare trunks only escaping the general wreckage; huge branches were spun out into the plains, half a mile away. Strangest of all, as indicating the force of the wind, bitter oranges, perhaps tasted in disgust by the fairies of the night, were pitched disdainfully out into the prairies five or six hundred yards away from the nearest point of wood. I should like to have known what the monkeys said, if they had time to say anything. I am sure I have often heard them swear in monkey language at the approach of an ordinary thunderstorm.

A North American settler in the New Australian colony had a rough experience. The wind tore the sheets of iron off his roof, and scattered them far apart over wood and dale for a mile around; all,

except one, like a visiting-card nailed to the door, was left twisted into a ring round a tree-trunk near by so firmly that a man could not pull it off without tools. How the man escaped with his life is a mystery. After this experience he abandoned his forest clearing and is now successfully running a sawmill.

These hurricanes occur only at long intervals. The writer knows the country almost to a yard. Strange to say, some twenty or thirty years previously the winds must also have been out on the 'bust' on a track just a hundred yards or so further east, as the big trees are all lying tangled up on the ground, a most unlovely spot to carry a deer out of on one's shoulders. Whether the winds returned from the Yankee's hut to their hiding-place in Brazil to wait another score of years for a similar outing I wot not. I only pray that when they do return I may not be sleeping in a tree-platform away up in the northern wilds. I have been through a cyclone in the Bay of Bengal, and that is enough for me. Angry seas running, mountains high, with crests tipped with broken spray, and chasing each other over the foaming wastes are bad enough in all conscience, though preferable any day or night to the risk of being converted into a human pancake under the trunk of some enormous 'lapacho' or 'curapay' in a wind-storm in Paraguay.

In conclusion, the writer makes his 'salaam' and

goes his way to join the ranks of the great unknown whose descriptive powers have proved unequal to the task allotted to them. There is at least the consolation of knowing that at the best mere pen-and-ink sketches can only suggest by means of comparisons in the minds of those whose previous experience has already provided a practical test of the possibilities of perspective and word-painting. To realize the difficulties of this branch of literary composition perhaps some of my readers might try the experiment of describing the most familiar scene, whose most ordinary details are impressed indelibly upon their memories. As a somewhat remarkable curiosity of this class of literature I cannot resist the temptation to take an extract from the work of a rather popular North American writer :

‘ There was a sougning rain asweep that night, with no wind to drive it ; yet it ceased and fell, sighed, and was hushed incessantly, as by some changing gale. Barbara was a good deal unnerved by the lanternless drive from the station. The shelving road, seamed with abrupt gullies, lay through murky fields and stony hollows, that she well remembered ; in the glimpsing lightning she saw scurrying trees against the sauve autumn sky, like etchings on bluish paper, the dry white-brown grasses swirled about the horses’ feet, in that windless rain ; and after what

thunderous fashion those horses pounded stableward ! They hurled through narrow gateways like stones from a catapult, rushed past ragged trees, whose boles seemed leaping out to meet them, span over large stones as though they had been mere fallen leaves.'

The writer was a lady, a really good sort, and if the reader only pardons me for the infliction I trust she will be equally indulgent to a pardoned sinner for this little bit of piracy.

The reader will understand that as the lost millions of Lopez still remain in their original hiding-place, it is quite undesirable, for many reasons, for the author to go into full details so as to indicate the circumscribed area where the treasure is actually interred. Apart from this complete information supplied to the writer by one of the survivors of the great tragedy, everybody out there has a knowledge of this episode in the war of the Triple-Alliance against Paraguay.







## WAITING AT THE FERRY

---

The ferry is quite an institution on some of the more frequented highways. The idea of linking canoes together is primitive, but simple and effective. A bullock cart is wheeled into the water as far as consistent with safety, until it is possible to pass poles underneath the framework, with the ends resting upon the canoe at either side. The unwieldy looking craft is then pushed off and guided to the other side of the river with long poles, where the oxen are once more hitched on to pull it out. Horses swim behind, being led with a rope. The oxen are always unyoked, and driven into the stream, which, after a little persuasion, they swim quite easily. Foot passengers are very much the exception, as almost every one has a horse. Indeed, in Corriates and Entre Rios, I have often seen the beggars—even in the cities—going from house to house on horseback. If any one doubts this statement, he has only to go to Parana, in Entre Rios, to verify this fact about 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning in any of the better class residential streets. There are few mendicants in Paraguay, and those mostly cripples or blind people in the town.

The tributaries of the Paraguay and Parana, having short courses, both flood and subside quickly after heavy rains. In some cases, overflowing their banks and spreading out on either side for half a league. This superfluous water will some day be used for irrigation purposes, which pays even in the well-watered Tropics.

## CHAPTER XIV

### A SOUTH AMERICAN ARCADIA

PROBABLY the wilds of Africa are better known to the average reader than the southern half of the American Continent. Why such should be the case it is hard to conceive, unless it be the scarcity of literature descriptive of the woods and pampas of the sunny south. Possibly there is an unconscious indifference and contempt for that which lies at our very doors. Needless to say that in such an area the characteristics of the people vary between the extremes of barbarism and the highest civilization. Therefore the scope of this chapter will be confined to a study of sylvan life in the heart of the South American backwoods, which has become familiarized to the writer by a more or less continued residence for a number of years.

Three hundred leagues beyond the city of Buenos Ayres—away up the river—we find the greatest contrast possible to the sheep-walks and wheat-fields



of the lower Plate provinces. An undulating country, with high 'lomas' and sweeping plains, gives an alternation of tropical forest and verdant prairie, no less pleasing to the eye and fair to look upon than practically advantageous to the settler, and full of possibilities for a combination of stock-raising and agriculture. An extraordinary landscape, composed of islands of wood, of every shape and form, and lakes of grassy 'campo,' redeems the scenery from the monotony of an otherwise flat country; while here and there a hillside displays a variety of foliage quite unknown beyond the forest regions of South America. At certain seasons of the year, masses of lovely flowers, mostly pink or yellow, framed in blended shades of silver and green, are transformed by the quivering sunlight into a mirage of fairy-land. Myriads of butterflies, flitting in the woods, in a despairing effort to get into harmony with the prevailing hues of the scenery, seem to have exhausted the ingenuity of Nature's artists, in the painting and shading of their wings with all the colours of the rainbow. In such a country the position of man is somewhat disappointing. One is constantly reminded of the saying of an Oriental Prince, who once remarked: 'My native land is a paradise—except that it is inhabited by asses.' It must be admitted by their most enthusiastic admirers that the sons of the soil—whatever their good qualities

—do not do much to develop the resources of their very fine country.

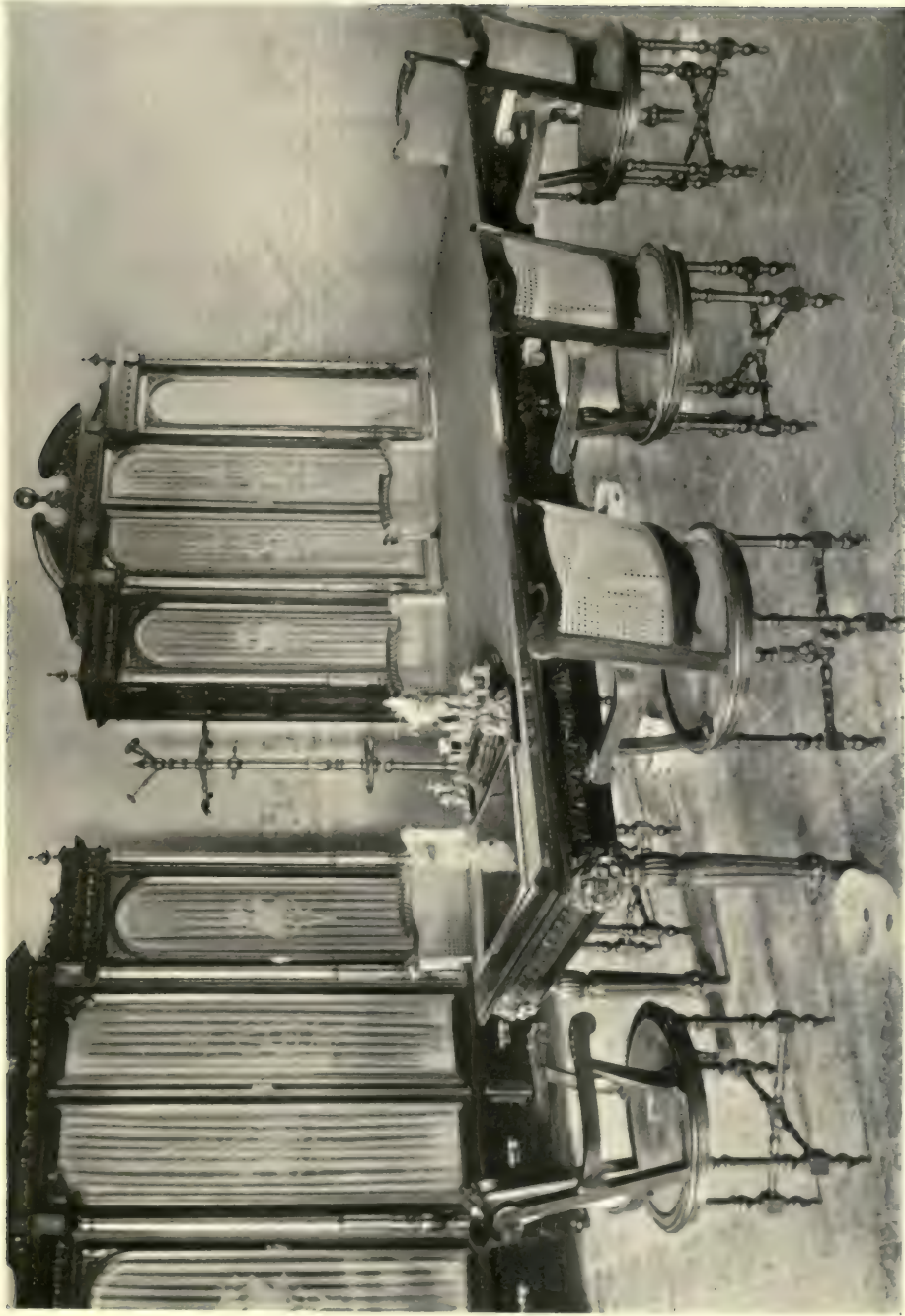
There is not much affinity between the Argentine gaucho and the Paraguayan 'chacrero.' A greater contrast is hardly possible. And the balance is mostly in favour of the converts of the Jesuits. Truly great indeed must have been the work of the disciples of Loyola to have left such abiding results after all these years. Cast your eyes in imagination over yonder sketch of 'campo,' to that little rustic cottage, nestling by the side of a wood. The thatched roof and red walls seem to fit into their surroundings quite harmoniously ; not being designed for effect, there is none of the glaring vulgarity of modern architecture. Little brown children—mostly clad in a state of Nature—play in the long shady verandah. The mother is busy perhaps doing their simple cooking or washing, or, possibly, aiding her husband to hoe the garden. She is by no means afraid of work or of soiling her hands, this worthy matron. Nature rewards her with an immunity from most of the aches and pains of up-to-date femininity ; and she often has a figure fit for the model of a Greek statue. Only when she has the misfortune to be rich enough to live in a town does she render her attractive womanly womanliness hideous by the use of cosmetics and fashion costumes, and her natural pleasing manners vulgar and ridiculous by

simpering and affectation. A certain kittenish comeliness is common to the younger women, and, occasionally, perhaps rarely, one sees a face and form which, simply attired and unadorned, would pass in Paris or London. The idiotic craze of often really beautiful dark women for powdering their faces is a constant offence to the eye in South America.

But to get back to our idyllic cottage. We have not mentioned the orange grove, which pretty well all the year round gives a supply of delicious and wholesome fruit. Truly, the little toddlers do not have a bad time of it in their way. Then there are the wild 'monte' fruits in profusion, the guavyra, the tatajiva, the jacaratiya, and the guavyju. They would not go for much in the Covent Garden Market; but the romance of cheating the monkeys and deer, as well as the fun of gathering them in the woods, improves the quality beyond comparison with anything displayed by vulgar ostentation in a common shop-window. The dark forest, to their imagination, is indeed a kind of fairyland, with certain drawbacks in the way of hobgoblins and mosquitoes. The latter are certainly real enough. The boys look eagerly forward to the time when they may trot behind their father in a hunt for game; there is much shouting and yelping of dogs, and now and again an armadillo or an agouti is scurried into a hollow log, only to be chopped out,

and ignominiously knocked on the head. Sometimes a peccary is brought to bay, and shot or macheted; or, possibly, the dogs are scattered, and the hunters treed by a herd of the larger variety of pigs. These chaps are rather short-tempered, and don't stand much on ceremony. At odd times, a sly and slinking jaguar is put up a tree and shot as easily as a fowl upon its roost. Generally the natives—in their own unsportsmanlike way—have a good time of it, and don't do the game much harm beyond scaring it off to unfrequented parts. The grey monte deer, indeed, quite turns the tables upon them, and abounds most where the population is thickest, right up to the immediate environs of the towns, feeding at night in the fields. Usually a couple of acres are cleared in the forest at the back of the house for the production of food stuffs. Perhaps a particularly energetic man will cultivate double this area, planted up with maize, mandioca beans and tobacco, with, possibly, a few peanuts and sweet potatoes. The local varieties of maize are susceptible of delicate manipulation, and the womenfolk excel in the art of producing delicious and wholesome dishes from the grain of this cereal. Mandioca, too, in its different varieties, is more than a substitute for the English potato; in fact, with a suitable proportion of animal fat, it forms almost a complete food. A few domestic cattle are always kept,





COUNCIL CHAMBER, BANCO AGRICOLA, ASCENSION.



mostly corralled at night, and the cows milked in the morning ; being of the old Criolla breed, they are almost useless for this purpose. The simple rustic has no idea of growing fodder and improving his animals by judicious selection.

The Jesuits certainly taught a happy religion. There is no end of feast days. And the fasts are judiciously ignored. And why not ? The Paraguayan peasant is certainly in some respects wise in his generation. Perhaps he may be a mere mass of unconscious matter, and his spirituality is non-existent ; but he has compensation in being absolutely unconscious of the pains and penalties incidental to a more refined and intellectual organization, in this grossly materialistic age. Anyway, although quite ignorant of his peculiar privileges, he is in some ways to be envied. He doesn't care a Spanish 'carramba' for all the fluctuations of the Exchange ; and he is equally ignorant and indifferent whether gold be at 600 or 6,000. An exceptionally well-informed man may sometimes be familiar with the name of the President. Usually he has not the remotest idea who he is, and cares even less ; in fact, he is absolutely and utterly indifferent to politics. As to joining in a revolution, he would not voluntarily leave his cigar and 'yerba mate' to ride after 'Bonnie Dundee,' Garibaldi, or George Washington and Bolivar all re-incarnated in

the form of a centaur, waving the holy cross for his emblem. Indeed, I have an antique crusader's spur, which has gone rusty from hanging unused for who knows how many generations in a peasant's rancho. All this speaks well for the Government, whose faults—and they are many—must be those of omission rather than commission. I don't believe he even knew he had a Government until a tax was put on dances in order to keep his levity within reasonable bounds, and a law passed compelling him to devote some eight days in the year to the making of public roads.

As to the bearing of the question on South American politics, it is only necessary to say that as he has been described, there are many hundreds of thousands of him, more or less self-supporting, on their own little homesteads. Without knowledge of labour-saving implements, they are hardworking and industrious as far as they can see incentive to exert themselves; home-loving, pacific, and law-abiding, yet just a little bit Oriental in their ideas of veracity and their code of honour, especially in small matters, for want of the example of a higher order of civilization. Of fair average intelligence, they are also amiable and courteous. What is to be done with them? Or what will they do with themselves? Were they by disposition any other than peaceful, empty-headed, good-natured bipeds, such a mass of bone and muscle



might be a menace. Judicious education will solve the problem. Many lessons may be learned from their manner of life. So far, the country can hardly be said to be even in a state of transition. As regards forty-nine-fiftieths of the population up till a few years ago, there was no trade, and very little money in circulation. No one becomes any poorer, nor, on the contrary, does any one become considerably richer. In some districts, even yet, a small insignificant town population may be seen sitting in front of their doors waiting for something to turn up, or the day of their awakening to arrive. They look, indeed, as though they had been waiting there for the last three hundred years, and did not expect anything before the resurrection of the Sphinx. There is now a small export trade in timber, hides, yerba, tobacco, and oranges. As yet, there has been no considerable influx of immigrants with the necessary capital and experience to give the natives an object-lesson in the advantages of up-to-date farming. There is not a sufficient excess of production over consumption in most lines to enable any very considerable export business to be done with profit. This state of affairs is sometimes unsatisfactory to the pioneer, who is often compelled to go into things in a fairly large way, in order to get upon a sound commercial footing. In many cases it also means the purchase and working of more or less costly machinery,

which in more advanced countries are conducted as separate enterprises.

However, taking all things into consideration, in striking contrast to the Argentine, with a floating cosmopolitan population, Paraguay, with all its backwardness, thanks to a strong peasantry, forms a united nation, with undeveloped possibilities for good or ill, which must leave its mark on the history of the continent. Imported goods are rather expensive, but in the way of local produce the cost of living is absurdly low. Land is cheap, and forty dollars spent in the way of pioneering will go as far as a hundred in most countries. In fact, an experienced man with £250, if he gets free land upon a Government Colony, can make quite a good start on a farm ; while with from £2,000 to £5,000 he may still go in for a fine estancia. However, unless he be of sporting tastes, with an ardent love of nature, or is content to dispense with some of the artificialities of life, he would probably be bored to death by the monotony of the life. It is certainly an ideal country for people of the type of the old-time squatter, who always moved away back to get beyond the sound of neighbour's axe.









## THE BANCO AGRICOLA, ASUNCION

*(See also page 177.)*

This institution is doing good work amongst the small cultivators in the way of educating them up to the possibilities of an export trade in tobacco and such-like country produce. The best seed is distributed free to all who care to make use of the privileges; and advances in cash are made to the extent of a pound an acre to enable poor people to overcome the initial difficulties of getting new ground cleared for planting. The Bank has a capital of \$14,856,000 paper, of which approximately \$6,298,587 has been loaned out to agriculturalists, repayable in annual instalments, covering a period of 15 years, \$3,864,641 in different industrial enterprises, \$3,427,528 upon mortgages, and \$1,266,080 to various commercial houses. Although the peasantry are notoriously improvident, they rarely fail to respond promptly to their obligations in the way of paying their debts. Fencing-wire, ploughs, small cane crushing-mills, &c., are also supplied to approved applicants, so that if the man on the land does not get on, it is largely due to his own ignorance or thriftlessness. The trouble is that his conscious wants are so few and easily gratified, that he is content to plod along in the primitive methods of the old Jesuits in the days of his forefathers in the early missions.



## CHAPTER XV

### ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

It seems quite incredible during the second decade of the twentieth century that any country possessing an almost inexhaustible fund of natural resources should languish in poverty and obscurity, while comparatively arid and valueless portions of the earth's surface elsewhere are being developed to their full capacity by a hard-working and industrious population. In such a case there must indeed be something radically wrong. So I will endeavour, in the most interesting manner possible, to show what that something is, and also to indicate the obvious remedy.

First comes the means of communication and facilities for trade. Casting one's eye over the map, the first impression would be that, with such a succession of fine natural highways, Paraguay should be at least as near London in matters of trade as South Africa. In actual fact, however, one may ship a package

of goods from London to Sydney, re-ship to Hong Kong, tranship again at that port, and, finally, pass the customs in London at half the expense which a similar consignment would have to incur between Asuncion and Buenos Ayres ; the freights for a three days' voyage down the river, with a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knot current in its favour, costing double the rates which rule elsewhere for a thirty days' trip across the ocean. Through freights from London to Asuncion amount to about fourteen dollars gold per ton. Say four dollars for the ocean voyage out to Monte Video, and the remaining ten dollars are eaten up in the process of transhipment, consular fees, and freight for a few days up the river. In South American countries, the straightout customs duties—heavy enough in all conscience—are a small matter in comparison with a host of minor imposts and the necessity to employ a professional customhouse agent—who is often no better than he ought to be.

These vexatious restrictions on trade tend towards monopolies in favour of big capitalists, for the simple reason that small shipments are rendered practically impossible by incidental expenses, which are as great for the smallest consignment as for a whole cargo. By this means commerce is strangled, and no one gets the benefit, except a few land sharks, who are of no use to anybody. However, the ' Young Paraguay

Party ' who are now in power will no doubt straighten these things out. If all revenue were raised by means of a land tax—and the customhouse pitched into the river—the country would go ahead by leaps and bounds. In any case, the river monopoly is now practically at an end, for through railway communication to Buenos Ayres came into operation on the first of July of the present year, and in face of the wholesome competition of rival enterprises, most of these restrictions upon honest trade will cease to exist. However, natural wealth and facilities for trade are of no use without people and the intelligent application of labour. The population so far is insufficient to handle a fiftieth part of the territory, even if they knew how to apply their energies to the best advantage. Paraguayans are often unjustly accused of laziness, because they get small results for their labour. The fact is that the North American or Colonial farmer, by means of labour-saving appliances and skilled labour, works his farm of a hundred acres with less effort than the Paraguayan peasant exerts in the cultivation of a two-acre patch cleared from the forest and laboriously prepared for planting each successive year with a 'machete' and a hoe. The produce of the former is nearly all available for trade and export, while the latter, by the primitive methods of hoe cultivation, has to work quite hard to grow



sufficient food stuffs for the use of his family, and, consequently, has little or no surplus for export to other countries. If he only knew how to direct his labour to the best advantage, he might easily produce a hundredfold, to the enormous advantage of himself and his country. So far he has had no chance to learn; he copies the methods of his fathers, and there is no one to set an example. This is where the chance of a skilled foreign agriculturist comes in. I use the word skilled advisedly. It is not sufficient that he be practical in working a farm, which has been reclaimed from Nature by his ancestors. He must also understand, in the first place, how to subdue or turn the forces of Nature to the best advantage. However, by making a study of the methods employed in clearing forest land in North America and Australia, the process of bringing new country under horse cultivation is really very simple, and cheap labour is available for the unskilled operations of clearing and stumping. In this manner we understand the comparative failure of many of the Government Colonies established for the benefit of Europeans. The would-be colonists in most cases were not only not agriculturists by profession, but, with rare exceptions, had not the remotest idea of converting the primæval forest into smiling homesteads. Fortunately many of them had the chance to establish themselves in the cattle

business, which requires a minimum outlay of skill and application. The moral is for the Government to encourage the immigration of people skilled in the working of large areas of land by means of cheap labour-saving appliances ; as also for such people to take advantage of the unique opportunities offered them in a country where there is, so far, absolutely no competition whatever.

The other drawbacks to the country are largely imaginary. At all events, they only become real by their effects upon people in other parts of the world who don't understand the actual conditions of life in the Republic, and are wrongly inspired by a feeling of distrust—which militates against trade, immigration, and the introduction of capital.

First of all there is the depreciation and fluctuation of the paper currency, which even at par only amounts to the ridiculously low sum of £7,000,000 sterling, and which could be redeemed at the present rate of exchange for £600,000. In these days of national extravagance, there are few countries indeed with so modest a financial burden. To the immigrant with gold in his pocket, this state of affairs is a decided advantage. For buying his land and stock he reaps the benefit of a demand for gold. His produce for export to other countries is sold at gold prices, while he pays for his labour in paper. It goes without saying

that with a few notable exceptions he must produce for export—although in some lines the prices of locally-consumed articles are satisfactory. Tradespeople are acute enough to take advantage of the exchange in all of its fluctuations. Importers sell to retailers at gold prices ; these latter always allow a handsome margin to compensate for any possible fall in the value of paper. At the present time, twelve dollars of the paper currency are equivalent to one dollar gold—a quite absurd state of affairs brought about by unscrupulous usurers, who have found a happy hunting-ground for the development of their parasitic instincts. This sort of thing cannot last much longer, and the paper currency will be circulated at its face value in a few years' time.

Another condition which militates against the advance of the Republic is a largely groundless and imaginary lack of confidence in the security of life and property. Argentina, where this state of affairs is an absolute fact, is going ahead like wildfire, and foreign capital is being invested to any amount. In Paraguay—on the contrary—we have an illustration of the old proverb that if you give a dog a bad name, you might as well hang him. If he happens to be a good dog, that comes rather hard upon him. In this case, during fifteen years' residence in the country, I have never known a foreigner lose a cent by

revolutions, except perhaps indirectly from temporary dullness of trade brought about by the ignorance of tradespeople abroad as to actual happenings. Until the masses of any country arrive at a certain stage of political responsibility, revolutions are sometimes necessary, and cost infinitely less than a general election. The functions of Government are rarely disturbed, even for an hour; an occasional change of officials is often salutary—a new broom is supposed to sweep clean. I am quite sure in any case there is no other country in the world where a revolution can be conducted in such an orderly manner—in most cases with less bloodshed and disturbance than during an ordinary election at home. As an impartial observer, I must say, looking back over my period of residence in the country, that, although there has been regrettable fighting on two occasions, yet each change of Government has given strength to the reform movement and has done something towards educating the people as to their political responsibilities.

Speaking in a general way, with the exception of the railway people, the foreigners in Paraguay—being mostly shopkeepers or tradesmen—have done nothing to advance the interests of the country. They all desire to exploit trade in some shape or form, and the Paraguayan countryman is left alone to develop the splendid resources of his country with





A COUNTRY STORE.



a 'machete and a hoe.' No country could advance under such conditions : it is a case of trying to develop a head without a body. Not much wonder that trade is dull—or non-existent—except in the spontaneous natural products of the forests and plains, for even the happy-go-lucky cattle industry must be placed in the same category. However, this state of affairs is all for the benefit of the lucky few who recognize actualities and care to take advantage of them. The fluctuations of the exchange in some South American countries are a mystery to the uninitiated. Frequently it is one of the methods by which greedy speculators bleed the unsophisticated public. In all countries where a paper currency without a corresponding gold basis is the rule—it is evident that, although such paper money may be current inside their own borders at face value, yet when it comes to be a case of procuring merchandise from abroad, it must be necessary either to pay in gold—or export in the way of exchange local products of like value. If exportation exceeds the equivalent of importations, gold, or drafts representing gold, are received in payment. If this satisfactory process goes on—the accumulation of gold causes the demand to fall, and paper money will keep its face value. But if, on the contrary, importation exceeds exportation, then we see a constant demand for gold to pay for foreign debts, and, consequently,

paper falls in value—as being useless for the purpose. A somewhat drastic but extremely efficacious remedy for the fluctuations of the exchange in small countries like Paraguay is the collection of a moderately heavy land tax, to be paid in gold—or else in kind ; that is, people might have the option of paying their dues in hides, coffee, tobacco, forest products, or any other exportable article of produce. This would not be felt by people who were actually working their holdings, and it would, at the same time, compel the absentee speculators—who own half the country—to do something to develop the resources of their properties. By this means all would benefit alike, and gold could be reduced to par in a few years. The collection of taxes in kind has proved to be a great success in many parts of the British Empire. A tax on land is the most simple, the cheapest to collect, and the fairest impost possible, affecting equally, directly or indirectly, all classes of the community alike.

The currency question suggests many thoughts on money matters all the world over. The recent crisis a few years ago in New York shows plainly that the idea of an existing gold basis is a fiction pure and simple. The system may and does work satisfactorily until there is a rush of panic-stricken investors. Co-operation of banks and prompt aid to the sick house may save the situation. Sometimes the panic becomes



national, as in Sydney in the early nineties, and, more recently, in North America. In the latter case the peril was averted only by shuffling the cards and borrowing gold from the Argentine, France, Germany, and England, thus showing that our gold coinage is merely a temporary expedient to stave off troubles in case of demand. So far all has been well, but some day we shall see the panic of a nation's depositors spread to the whole commercial world ; and then will arrive the day of judgement. It will probably be found at such a time that the existing store of gold does not really amount to more than 25 per cent. of the face value of the paper issued upon that basis, and the sooner the various Governments set themselves to the task of finding a remedy for this highly dangerous state of affairs, the better for everybody concerned. Seventy-five per cent. of the so-called wealth of the world is fictitious, and has no more substance than a wreath of smoke blown about by the wind. Our present sapient attitude is that of the traditional ostrich, hiding its head in the sand.

The whole question is most interesting and instructive. Take the Argentine Republic, where the paper dollar is circulated at about half its face value ; one would naturally infer that commercial stagnation and all-round hard times would be the inevitable result. Coming down to actualities, we find on the contrary

that production is increasing enormously, that there is no such thing as an unemployed element in the country, and that a comparative degree of prosperity is the lot of all. On the other hand, in Great Britain, the Australian colonies, and the United States, where the currency is at par—indeed, in the first-mentioned countries, the silver coinage is circulated at about one hundred per cent. above its commercial value—in striking contrast to the state of affairs existing in the land of the pampas, we often find trade dull in the extreme, and that a considerable section of the population of our Anglo-Saxon territories are annually compelled to appeal to the Governments of their respective countries for bread or work. In India the silver rupee only passes for two-thirds of the currency value of its English counterpart, the ordinary two-shilling piece.

It would seem that the only solution of this tangle would be the adoption of a universal currency. The extraordinary fluctuations in the value of these pieces of greasy paper and old metal are beyond the ken of any ordinary human being. In the far-off days of misty antiquity, a system of barter first originated; then some bright intellects hit upon the idea of utilizing shark's teeth, pieces of wood, or shining stones as a medium of exchange. One of the earliest forms of currency, and even yet perhaps the most universal,

is the cowrie shell. Cowries are largely used for this purpose in the South Sea Islands, the Malay Archipelago, Siam, the East Indies, Zanzibar, and Central Africa. The original object which led to the introduction of money was the desirability of dispensing with barter and facilitating exchanges. Many people think that this object would have been very much better obtained in some other manner. And there is an old book—a very old book—which says plainly that the love of money is the root of all evil. But supposing one admits the necessity of giving an arbitrary value to pieces of old rag or dirty metal, it would seem to any person of ordinary common sense that the first qualification necessary for any object to gain the preference as a medium of exchange should be cheapness of production, durability, facilities for cleansing and disinfection, and convenience for circulation. The idea of taking what is called the intrinsic value of any medium of exchange as a standard is absurd in the extreme; because, in the first place, the cost of production must constantly fluctuate; and, secondly, it is only by mere chance that currency of this class and trade necessities should happen to correspond with each other. Take gold, for example. The intrinsic value of this metal is comparatively small, being, perhaps, of the greatest use in dentistry. The labour, energy, and genius which are wasted in defacing and



rooting up God's earth in the search for this rubbish would go a long way towards obtaining a food supply for the whole world if only directed into a proper channel. Thousands of splendid men every year leave their bones to bleach in the deserts or the wilds lured to destruction by visions of wealth, and dreams of gold. Who can number the wars it has occasioned, or the black deeds which have been committed to secure the possession of this form of wealth? Truly—in the light of past history—gold must be regarded as the accursed metal. The Wise Man of the East was not far wrong after all. Anyway, it must be evident, even to a child, that if we must have money, paper money—properly guaranteed—is certainly preferable to our present forms of metallic currency, as being cheaper of production—and waste of labour consequently very much minimized. Nickel, perhaps, is even still more desirable—as being easier of disinfection.

Shall we see an international commission in session for the purpose of resolving the problem? Or shall we still bury our heads in the sand and let sleeping dogs lie—until they bite? Before this big, stupid, lumbering world of ours gets a grip of the question, we expect to see commercial panics, banking crises, with perhaps a few wars thrown in by way of variety.







## **CEDAR LOGS FLOATING BY THE RAILWAY BRIDGE, TEBICUARY-GUAZU**

---

The Paraguay Central Railway has tapped the last considerable area of virgin forest remaining on earth. It is a fact that a monkey could pass from branch to branch right through the equatorial districts, away up to the banks of the Amazon, without once touching ground, merely making detours here and there to get around the inlets of open prairies. On the fringe of this great forest the timber is floated down the rivers or carted out to the railway in bullock carts for transmission to the treeless plains of the Argentine Republic, where there is not a stick of wood for fencing or building purposes.

A beginning has just been made shipping these extremely durable and good all-purpose woods to the United States of North America. The forest appears to be indestructible. A deserted clearing is filled up, as though by magic, in a few years with second growth and vines, which effectually obliterate the last traces of such spasmodic efforts to transform the face of Nature in the tropics. A glance at the map will show the possibilities of the timber trade. From Paraguay to Tierra del Fuego cattle ranches and wheat farms are to be fenced, the frame-work for houses in a thousand new towns is required, sleepers for railways, and piles for bridges and dock frontages, to say nothing of the hitherto unexploited markets of Europe and South Africa, and a supply of cabinet woods to make furniture for half the world.

## CHAPTER XVI

### FOREST PRODUCTS

ABOUT half the area of the Republic consists of dense forests, distributed as a rule very evenly over the whole country in clumps or patches of wood amongst the grazing lands ; in the East and North having a tendency to run into large forests, which sometimes stretch out continuously for hundreds of square miles. In other parts of the world, we frequently find large areas of woodland composed entirely of the same kind of timber. Here, on the contrary, the variety is infinite—to such an extent as to be an actual drawback to the woodcutters, if they are in search of any particular class of wood. The isolated specimens of any given kind are dotted about here and there, often at considerable distance from their fellows. This necessitates no end of road-cutting from tree to tree, to get a quantity of any given sort. On the other hand, the wonderful variety of woods upon any circumscribed area enables people to obtain whatever class of timber



they require for special purposes—without travelling any considerable distance for the purpose.

*Cedar* of large size and good quality is to be found in most of the woods. Excepting the banks of the rivers or in the old settled districts, where the people have already cut out the most valuable woods for export to the Argentine, we get a fine assortment of timbers, suitable for cabinet-making, many of which have not been placed upon the market up to date—as in most cases only short lengths of small trees are available; also no one has been enterprising enough to put up samples for exhibition in Europe. The bitter orange is obtainable in large quantities in all the forests of the interior, the leaves only being utilized for the extraction of the essential oil, which is saleable only in France. Of late years, the supply has exceeded the demand, and prices have fallen correspondingly.

*Guajavi* is a substitute for American hickory, being used for making axe handles and similar purposes.

*Peterevi Negra* takes the place of European walnut in furniture making. The trees rarely grow beyond two feet in diameter, but are usually fine and straight of stem.

*The Peterevi Blanco* may be used with advantage for all the purposes of North American pine, being soft, easy to work and suitable for the making of packing-cases and indoor work of every kind. It is not

sufficiently durable for exposure to the elements, although the presence of some chemical element in its fellow, the *Peterevi Negra*, makes it rather good for that purpose.

*Tatajiva*, the bright golden-yellow mulberry wood, produces wonderful effects in artistic cabinet work, the fruit also of this tree being of good quality; but the birds always get most of it, as the gathering of berries from a tree 150 feet high is a somewhat arduous business. This variety of the mulberry has no thorns in a natural state in the *primaeval* forests; but, strange to say, by some defensive instinct of nature, when the original stem is cut down, it throws up suckers which are quite a mass of long prickles. For this reason the tree is well hated by the peasantry.

*Palo Blanco*—as the name indicates—is a white wood, fairly useful for many indoor purposes, but rather heavy for the manufacture of packing-cases. It remains quite green for an incredible time after being felled, and consequently requires a considerable period for seasoning.

*Ivira-Pitah*—or red wood—is one of the best all-purpose timbers in existence, being light, tough, and hard—rather an unusual combination. It is certainly one of the best woods in the world for gun and rifle stocks.

*Curupay* is a splendid hard wood, extremely



GATHERING PARAGUAYAN TEA





tough, hard, and celebrated as being one of the strongest woods in the world. It is very useful for posts and rails, beams, piles, railway sleepers, &c.

*Lapacho* and *Urunday* are also very fine, hard woods, extremely heavy, strong, and durable, hardly equalled in any other part of the world. I have seen house-posts in ancient buildings, which have remained perfectly sound for a couple of hundred years in the ground. This is a marvellous test in a damp, hot, and humid climate. These timbers are so very hard that in mills the circular saws have to be set in a special manner to work them. And the ordinary North American and Colonial axes always break in chipping out the flinty heart wood.

*Incensia*, or incense wood, is also a hard and durable timber, but somewhat scarce.

*Ivivaroa*, a light, hard, and extremely tough wood, is far and away the best timber in the world for the construction of wheels and like purposes. It is wonderful to see the huge cart-wheels of the country, lasting for years and years, without the iron tyres which are considered indispensable everywhere else.

The rude methods of the timber getters would seem incredible to backwoodsmen in other parts of the world. The logs are squared by hand in the forests, which wastes at least one-third of the timber. Not much wonder that North American boards, planks,

and scantling are sold in competition in the Argentine, even as high up the river as Parana and Corrientes, although the North American mill hand is paid at the rate of two to three dollars gold per day ; while his Paraguayan ' confrere ' considers himself lucky if he earns a quarter of that sum. Still—owing to the fine qualities of the cedar and hard woods—timber is one of the principal exports, which will no doubt increase, as the all-through railway will open up new markets on its way to Buenos Ayres, through districts where timber is either scarce or non-existent. Supposing the forecasts of experts to be realized, things will soon look up in this business. If their estimates are correct, in another decade the only countries having a surplus for export will be Canada and Scandinavia. Many highly civilized nations, realizing the possibilities of a timber famine, are already beginning to plant up forest reserves to provide for future wants. This being the case, the Central South American woods are the only large unexploited forest areas remaining in the world. So far they remain practically untouched, the tiny cultivation patches of the sparsely populated native settlements really not counting at all. Less wasteful methods of handling must be devised, and the means of communication improved before many of these special purpose woods can be exported to all parts of the world.

Nothing is practically known of the drugs and dyes existing in the forests, so there is a chance for the scientific botanist to make discoveries. There is certainly an opportunity for some enterprising individual to make an immense fortune by the cultivation of a herb, which possesses the strange property of hardening animal fats, and imparts a rich yellow colour. It is actually used for the purpose by many people, and would be invaluable for the preservation of butter in hot weather. This plant is found growing naturally in certain swampy regions.

*The Caraguata*—a local plant of the pineapple family—is used locally for the manufacture of cordage. It is certainly very good for the purpose, although as only the wild plants are in use, there is no proof as to the results obtainable by cultivation. The bark of the Curupay is very rich in tannin, and is gathered for local use in the tanneries.

*Yerba Mate* is the only other forest product exploited on any considerable scale. Thousands of labourers are recruited for the purpose in the settled districts, and are usually paid by weight of leaf gathered. These poor beggars have rather a bad time of it, with real and imaginary hardships, at all times being exposed to the attacks of mosquitoes, ticks, and other insect pests. Now and again they have unpleasant interviews with impudent jaguars, which are rather

trying to the nerves of an almost naked man, armed with only a machete. The feline sometimes thinks the biped smells rather good to eat, and unpleasant consequences are apt to ensue. As if their real troubles were not sufficient, the woodsmen fear the pranks of malicious fairies, and wandering spirits of defunct Indians. The woodsman really works like a Trojan. Dispensing with all his clothing except a waist cloth, he keeps time to the blows of the axe with queer old songs, frequently interpolated with ear-splitting yells to scare off evil spirits and wild animals—all excepting the shy forest deer, who arises from his lair and sneaks quietly up to get a peep at the human, to see what on earth is the matter. His curiosity once gratified, he glides off to some more distant spot in order to enjoy his sleep in peace and quietness. Most of the Yerba business is now done by large companies, who have quite an army of peons in their service. These men are tempted to engage by advances of a few hundred dollars, which is mostly spent right off in more or less harmless and silly dissipation. Being naturally improvident, although they have a chance of earning good wages, the original debt grows and grows, until there is no chance of their getting back to their old homes. Picadas are cut through the wood for hundreds of miles, for the use of bullock carts, and many of the rivers are navigated by small,



flat-bottomed barges. These men suffer in vitality from poor foods and the pernicious South American custom of sucking strong infusions of 'mate' at all hours of the day as a substitute for food. This kind of imprudence is not peculiar to South Americans.

*The Quebracho*, or sandal-wood industry, is a very important business in the Paraguayan Chaco. No other class of timber worth speaking of is obtainable in that comparatively flat and arid region. A considerable part of the exports are in the form of an extract used in France and Germany for tanning purposes.

The immense resources of the forest areas of Paraguay are more fully described incidentally with other matter in chapters devoted primarily to sketches of backwoods life, plantation industries, &c.



## CATTLE-BRANDING UPON AN ESTANCIA

---

South American methods of handling cattle are more picturesque than impressive. Time, horses, and men are not much of a consideration. Most of the work is done with the lasso out on the open prairie. You must first catch your animal, then hold him, a most exciting and interesting occupation, where man and horse have to work like Trojans, and the wits are scared out of the cattle in the fluster of rounding up. Naturally, the peons become—within limits—experts with the lasso, being sometimes able, with a bit of luck, to catch any given leg of a beast, if desired to do so as a test of their skill. But beyond these feats of horsemanship, the gaucho is simply nowhere as a cattle man. One often sees thirty or forty peons driving a herd of cattle which, in Australia, would be managed by three or four at the most. Instead of working their stock in properly arranged yards with the necessary races and pens, even in a corral, they fall back upon the inevitable lasso for everything, when it is desired to catch an animal. However, if the peon can raise a decent horse with a set of silver-mounted saddle gear for holidays with a few dollars in his pocket for the gaming table, he is content. In Paraguay the semi-agricultural life has toned down his wild blood very considerably, and, under skilled management, he is a useful man. Large estancias are the exception rather than the rule. Few have more than three or four thousand animals, although some estancias own up to 20,000 head.







## CHAPTER XVII

### AGRICULTURE AND CATTLE-RAISING

SOME day Paraguay will become the garden of South America. There is hardly a yard of waste land in the whole country, even the 'esteros' or swamps being in almost every case easily drained by plough or scoop. The soil is excellent for rice, sugar-cane, or grazing-land. Indeed, for pasturage, if the rough native herbage is destroyed by ploughing, and suitable artificial grasses substituted, the results are wonderful. The growth is continuous. Generally speaking, in the south, centre, and west of the Republic, there is an equal distribution of wood and plain, the contour of the country being a series of wavy undulations—with here and there an isolated outcrop of low hills. The higher ground is almost invariably covered with dense forest. Naturally, the growth and decay of roots loosens and blends the primary red soil with a thick layer of vegetable mould, composed of rotten leaves and the trunks of fallen trees. As the rays of sunshine

cannot penetrate the dense foliage, the process of disintegration is gradual and complete, none of the elements of fertility being lost by evaporation. The resultant soil is eminently suitable for the production of the plant life of sub-tropical regions, giving satisfactory results for a number of years without cultivation. There are several methods of clearing forest land and bringing it under the plough. In every case, the undergrowth must be cleared away with a 'machete.' Then, the pioneer, if he chooses, may dig out a small hole at the side of each tree, cutting out the roots at the same time to the necessary depth. In this way he may harness the forces of nature to work in his favour, so that the first wind-storm will blow the trees down and render the extraction of the remaining roots an easy process. The smaller twigs and foliage may then be chopped off and burnt, while the remaining branches and trunk can with advantage be converted into charcoal, for which there is a ready sale, or stacked in heaps as firewood for future use. Useful or marketable timber should be removed to a place of safety. This is by far the most economical way of getting the land under the plough; the old method of first cutting the trees down, and afterwards removing the stumps, being most laborious, as huge holes must be excavated, and the last root cut out before the stump can be taken out. In the manner

described the weight of the tree swaying in the wind is made to do its own work. Some people might prefer to cut off all stumps close to the surface of the ground, so as to admit of the use of 'disc' cultivators, from the very start. These implements cut up all the smaller roots and roll over the larger roots and stumps without danger of breakage. The Australian 'stump-jumping' plough, which automatically passes over these obstructions, is also useful. Where the stumps are left in the ground, sugar-cane is an excellent crop to clean the land. The humidity engendered by the dense growth of cane causes the wood to decay rapidly, while the annual burning of the dead leaves soon completes the process. After a few years most of the stumps will have been removed by natural causes. The native method is primitive and wasteful, the trees being felled in the ordinary manner, and after the branches and brushwood are burnt, the crops are planted with a hoe. The first year but little cleaning is necessary, as there are no weeds. In preparing for the second season, all weeds are cut down with a machete—piled in heaps—and burnt. This process has to be repeated every successive year, until the work of keeping the crops clean by the absurd method of hoe cultivation becomes so arduous that the spot has to be abandoned, and a new clearing made once more in the virgin forest. In the course of a few years, as the air spaces in the



soil, formed by the decayed roots, get filled up and the earth sets down hard, the results of cropping without cultivation become less satisfactory. And in this way has originated the fiction of the soil being impoverished after a few years. As a matter of fact, people who merely scrape the surface of the earth can't expect to get bumper crops for ever. Such land is really very rich, and, with proper cultivation and rotation of crops, will maintain its productiveness for all time. In some of the old settled districts, where land is scarce, the peasants use a wooden plough—like the natives of India—which merely scratches the ground without turning a furrow. Need we wonder then that the native farm averages something like two acres for each family? and that they eat most of their produce at home? Not much chance of a surplus for trade under such circumstances! However, so much the better for the man who knows his business. The staple food crops are maize and mandioca.

*Maize.*—Two varieties of the former are cultivated: the one a hard white—most excellent for nutritive qualities—and resisting the ravages of the grain weevil; the other a soft yellow, giving flour almost as fine as that of wheat. Unfortunately, it contains a large proportion of starch, and does not compare with the former from an alimentary point of view. And although the bread is undoubtedly



wholesome, in the absence of any considerable quantity of gluten it is dry and crumbly—unless mixed with a sufficiency of the delicious treacle of the country, or made up with a certain proportion of wheaten flour. The natives frequently toast the mature grain in front of the fire and use it in this form, to the great advantage of their teeth. During the coming wheat famine, predicted by experts, people will have to learn the advantage of this cereal. It is most nutritious, more so than wheat, and may be prepared for use in an infinite number of ways. It is much more productive, and may be grown, with equal success, alike in the tropics or temperate zones, wherever the soil is moderately good and the rainfall averages thirty inches or more.

As in the case of wheat and most other food products, the ordinarily published tables of analysis are of no value, because the constituents vary so much in different classes that they frequently approximate more nearly to a corresponding analysis of a totally different cereal. Local conditions of climate and soil may also bring about these results.

*Mandioca*.—The other staple food of the country is 'Mandioca'—an ideal root crop for this purpose. The varieties are quite numerous—the writer having identified over forty. The large bitter kind, used for making starch, farina, &c., more commonly grown

in Brazil, is somewhat rare, the edible varieties having the preference in Paraguay. These range from the 'cambi,' which runs up without a branch to fifteen feet or even more in newly cleared forest, down to the little 'jeruti-mi,' a diminutive plant usually only reaching a height of two feet. The roots branch out laterally from the base of each stalk, a few inches beneath the surface of the ground, from five to a dozen to each plant, varying in length from ten inches to half a yard, and from an inch in diameter up to the thickness of a man's arm. The crop may be left in the ground for several years, growing larger year after year ; but after the first season, it is somewhat hard and woody. From an economic point of view, this is a decided advantage, as an almost certain food supply for some years may be thus assured without risk. The propagation is simple and inexpensive, the stalks being cut in May or June, before frost, and stored in the shade. In the spring these stems are cut in lengths of about three inches, and planted in the ground at a distance of three feet by four apart. For modern methods of cultivation a few grains of maize must be dropped in the furrows to show the lines for horse cultivation, as the mandioca is at first of very slow growth and barely visible in rows, even after the first cleaning. This plant deserves to be better known and appreciated as a hardy and reliable food crop,

in the tropics, sub-tropics, and even a large part of the temperate zone, where there is a fair security of six or seven months without frost. Supposing up-to-date methods were employed in cultivation, and the root converted into farina or starch, with tapioca as a bye-product, it would prove most profitable from a financial point of view. In this way it has already become an immense source of wealth to Java, and there is no reason why the same thing might not be done in Paraguay. The yield is very heavy with good cultivation, and both top and roots may be used to advantage in the feeding of live stock, of course excepting the poisonous non-edible varieties. There is a good market for all mandioca products—excepting tapioca—which, as a high-priced article of food in Europe and North America, would pay for exportation. The dark-green foliage and graceful form make a field of mandioca a pleasure to look upon.

*Beans.*—The natives unconsciously do much to preserve the fertility of their lands by planting beans between the rows of maize, as a catch-crop—an impossible thing to do if labour-saving implements are used—thus restoring the nitrogenous elements to the soil.

*Tobacco.*—Tobacco of good quality is grown in small quantities for use and export. It might indeed become a perfect mine of wealth if cultivated in a



proper manner, and cured in drying-sheds as in Cuba. This industry might be expanded indefinitely ; but, although the Government has been very good in giving loans to small cultivators to induce them to take up the business, the advance is mostly spent in a few days on gay clothing or a round of festivities, until the last cent has been squandered uselessly. No good can be done in this country by giving financial assistance to the agricultural classes. Although fairly hard-working, they are utterly improvident and irresponsible.

*Sugar-cane.*— Properly managed sugar-plantations would yield an enormous fortune for the happy owners, there being an increasing local market at about a wholesale price of  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound, and most of it is imported. Like everything else, it is essential to have the plantation laid out in such a way as to make it possible to cultivate thoroughly by horse or motor implements, and arranged in sections so as to make it an easy matter to put a fire through each field and burn the leaves off as required for crushing, so as to obviate the heavy expense of cleaning the cane by hand.

In these times, the successful cultivator must call in the forces of nature to assist him whenever possible. Seeing that Demerara planters can sell their sugar in London as low as  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound, there is no reason why Paraguay should not export a surplus—when that





SOUTH AMERICAN COWBOY.



stage of the industry is reached. The plant grows luxuriously over five-sixths of the area of the Republic, particularly in the centre and north, where there is less liability to frost. Up to the present, most of the cane grown is converted into treacle and rum, so that Europe has not a monopoly of the folly of converting good food-stuffs into vile and noxious drinks. The primary expenses of laying out a sugar-plantation in the forest districts may be to a great extent recouped by planting a catch crop of maize between the rows in July and planting up with sugar-cane in September. The maize will be ready to harvest before the sugar-cane has begun to grow rapidly ; so that no harm will be done to the staple crop.

*Rice.*—There are also enormous areas for the cultivation of rice. In fact, suitable varieties may be grown anywhere; although it is only desirable to embark in the industry in the low-lying flats, where the land is at once amenable to plough cultivation, and where reapers and binders may be used as in the harvesting of wheat and other cereals. The local markets and prices are highly satisfactory. A small quantity is grown by the absurd method of planting in clumps and cleaning with a hoe, instead of making a fine seed bed with plough and harrow and sowing broadcast in civilized fashion.

*Pea Nuts.*—Considering the demand for oil seeds

in Europe, the pea nut deserves some attention. Enormous quantities are exported from Uganda and the African coast to Marseilles, and, if Paraguay had the workers, there is no reason why she should not do a similar business. Not only is this plant most prolific in its yield of ground nuts, but the tops may be utilized as the finest form of fodder for live-stock. In Europe the oil is mostly used for the adulteration of the higher-priced olive oil—from which, when fresh, it is hardly distinguishable.

*Chilies.*—Another East African product, chilies, may be produced even more advantageously in Paraguay. It may be seen growing practically wild in the old deserted cultivation patches of the peasantry. The price of the dried chilies runs to about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  cents gold per pound in New York, which should leave a handsome margin for the cultivator; particularly if he produced on a scale large enough to enable him to export direct to North America.

*Potatoes.*—English potatoes produce fair crops, but are somewhat unreliable. The different varieties of the sweet potato are most prolific; and the vines may be utilized for the feeding of live-stock, while the tuber is slightly more nutritious than the European potato.

*Tanias, &c.*—Tanias and yams may also be cultivated to advantage.



*Vegetables.*—European vegetables may, within certain limitations, do fairly well. The writer has produced cabbages weighing up to 23 lbs. But manure is always necessary, except in the newly cleared forest land.

*Millet.*—The different varieties of millet produce remarkably well, and no doubt the better classes have a great future as being the most nutritive and prolific of our cereals, and also as being the best grain for the use of poultry.

*Citrus Fruit.*—Paraguay is noted for the excellent quality of its citrus fruits. With good shipping arrangements, which will be initiated during the present year, this industry might be developed to any extent for export to the Argentine and Uruguay, as also for the European markets, where Paraguayan oranges would arrive in the *summer*, when they would be more appreciated, and when European oranges are out of season.

*Oranges.*—The unique advantages of this state of affairs is obvious. Of course, the planter must have intelligence enough to lay out a plantation in rectangular lines to facilitate cultivation and to select the specially attractive classes of oranges which at all times command good prices in the markets of the world. Some people plant old and stunted seedlings in higgledy-piggledy fashion, so as to make cultivation

an impossibility, hack off half the branches according to their ideas of pruning, and then give the country a bad name, because they cannot earn a living. People must either know their business, or have brains enough to learn it.

*Lemons.*—Lemons might also be grown to advantage for the Argentine markets ; as also limes, which are most prolific and may often be found growing wild. This branch of fruit-growing is assuming considerable proportions in some of the West Indian islands.

*Pigs.*—Pig-breeding, if carried out on farming principles, is a profitable investment, as there is always a good demand for lard, &c.

*Intense Cultivation.* — Taken on the whole, Paraguay is eminently adapted for intense cultivation and general farming ; that is, a combination of agriculture with dairy-farming, apiculture, poultry-raising, &c. The milking cows and working horses must be stall-fed at night so as to be able to utilize the stable manure to improve the fertility of the soil, and by utilizing every little source of revenue, so as to make a big thing in the aggregate. In this matter no man on earth knows where the line of development will be drawn in the most highly skilled profession in the world.

*Yerba.*—One of the most promising industries in

the country—the artificial cultivation of yerba mate—is considered of sufficient importance to demand separate treatment in a special chapter devoted to the subject.

*Cattle.*—Owing to centuries of neglect and acclimatization in the tropics, the cattle do not put on much fat. As a consequence, animal oils and fat are very dear. With a continuous growth of pasturage, nature has not called for a reserve of fatty matter to fall back upon in times of hardship during inclement seasons. In the same manner the cows, not being milked, just produce sufficient to rear their calves, that quantity being naturally less in a mild climate than amongst the desolate wastes of the frozen north. In Brazil the breed has been much improved by crossing with the African zebu and European cattle. In such a country, the camps being understocked, the grass grows wild and rank, except during certain periods, after burning the new grass mixed up with old decaying leaves. This neglected pasturage cannot be expected to give the best results. Owing to the unchecked vegetation and proximity of forests, blow-flies are troublesome, and, at certain seasons, the least wound requires an application of tar. In fact, the weekly round-up and doctoring is about the only work done by the people who profess to be stock-breeders. The cattle get to know the call of the herdsman, and trot up to



the 'rodeo' in the expectation of getting salt. Stock-breeding gives good returns, even by these primitive methods.

*Sheep*.—A few degenerate sheep may be seen here and there. When I say degenerate I mean that, as they have been in the country for three hundred years, they have lost their fat and wool, as being unnecessary. Otherwise they are perfectly healthy, and do well, scab and other diseases being unknown. No doubt by judicious management and the periodical importation of rams from cold countries, the acclimatized animal might be made as great a success as he has been proved to be in the far North of Queensland by the use of like methods. The intelligent and experienced pastoralist cannot go far wrong, as land is still cheap, and there is any amount of scope, particularly in view of the fact that most meat-exporting countries have a rapidly increasing population, which will shortly leave no surplus for export to Europe.

*Papyrus*.—According to the best authorities, there is some risk of a paper famine in the near future ; and many people with an eye to business are seeking for a substitute in wood pulp. This has led to the revival of the ancient papyrus industry in Egypt. The durability of the ancient manuscripts in the tombs by the Nile has always been a matter of astonishment to savants. The plant had been allowed to die out

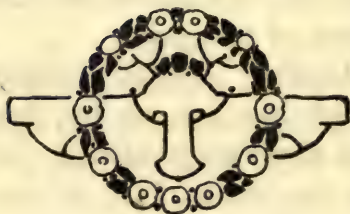


on the Delta, but recently the seed was procured, with considerable difficulty, from remote places in the Soudan, and re-introduced to its old home in Lower Egypt. The growth of this reed is marvellous, reaching a height of five or six feet in three weeks, and, when mature, will give a weight of a hundred tons to the acre. The first cuttings have been sent to a British paper-making firm, who report favourably upon it. There is reason to believe that we have a very good substitute in Paraguay, which, at present, is only used for making mats. In any case, if the papyrus industry develops, Paraguay has thousands of acres in the low lands and upon river embankments eminently suited for the cultivation of this plant.

*Rubber.*—Another possible industry is rubber cultivation, which has not, so far, been developed. Several varieties of rubber-producing plants are found growing wild in the forests, but, in view of the large areas being planted elsewhere, as the result of the rubber boom, the venture may be somewhat doubtful, unless a considerable number of would-be planters were disheartened by the collapse of the boom.

In the way of agriculture, Paraguay holds one inestimable advantage over the more southern countries of the River Plate, in that it is not subjected to the ravages of drought or locusts. It is true that at periods of every eight or ten years, a temporary

invasion of locusts does occur, but the foliage of the forests is so abundant, and the pasturage of the prairies so green, that they do little damage to the crops. A few heavy thunderstorms soon disgust these pests, and they promptly beat a retreat to the drier and more sunny provinces of the Argentine.









## A CONTRAST IN AGRICULTURAL METHODS

---

The horse team is interesting as being almost if not quite the first attempt to make use of this invaluable quadruped for agricultural operations in the Republic. This English boy turns up more ground in a morning than a bullock team can get over in a week. The Paraguayan plough is the old Egyptian model (see Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*), introduced by the Moors into Spain and brought from thence to South America by the Jesuits. As may be seen, it is simply a blade of hardwood, morticed into a wooden beam, with a single handle. This implement merely scratches the ground, without turning a furrow. The ryots in India also use a similar implement of like origin. Evidently the ploughmen of many countries have not much inventive genius. The oxen are attached by means of a yoke tied with greenhide straps around the horns. A man or boy always goes in front of the oxen to guide them. Most of the cultivation is done with the chipping hoe, so that the man who is crushed out by extreme competition elsewhere need not fear to plant his stakes in Central South America, as long as he is sure of a market. It is certainly the poor man's country—with just a little capital and a little practical experience, which would not be sufficient to give him a start anywhere else. The grove in the background is composed of orange-trees, which may be seen at every rancho in the settled districts, and form an ideal shade for a resting-place during the heat of the day. Beyond the fence one sees the top of a banana patch shimmering in the sunshine.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### A MODERN 'MAYFLOWER' EPISODE : AN ATTEMPT TO REALIZE UTOPIA

SPEAKING in a general way, it may be said that only the faintest ripple of the onward wave of British Colonization has, so far, reached the shores of this Mesopotamia of South America. The hardy Scotch and Irish settlers, who contributed one of the most important factors to the progress of the Argentine Republic, rarely strayed beyond the sheep-walks of the pampas. Still, one or two efforts have been made to colonize the land of oranges and 'yerba mate.' In the first instance, about the year 1873, the Government, displaying most commendable zeal in the effort to attract English agriculturalists, offered some rascally adventurer a premium of five dollars per head for all the people of this class whom he might be able to recruit. So this gentleman, being desirous of earning his money in the easiest way possible, promptly scoured the highways and by-ways of London,

collecting the lame, the halt, and the blind, to cross the distant main and found new homes in the primaeval forests of South America. In all, some fourteen hundred persons were got together in this manner and described in the official dispatches as 'Lincolnshire farmers.' I have been told by one of these people that, out of the whole number, there were not more than a dozen who really could be classed under this category, the remainder consisted of the sweepings of the streets; out-of-works, who never desired to find employment; costers, matchmakers, clerks, mechanics, and numbers of aliens, who had been stranded on British shores. The voyage out was favourable. Upon arrival in Asuncion these people were well treated and given pecuniary assistance until they should be able to harvest their first crops. During the first week in the capital these adventurous pioneers showed the metal they were made of by copying the manners of the lower-class natives. Their women paraded the streets, puffing away at enormous cigars. Rum was obtainable at nominal prices, and glorious sprees became the rule rather than the exception. They were finally allotted a remarkably healthy bit of country near Itape, some eighty miles inland. Here the career of dissipation, at Government expense, went on to its logical conclusion—sickness, epidemics, and death. The 'terrible climate' accounted for

everything. Exactly how the result came about will never be known, as there is no medical evidence to go upon. I suppose it was typhoid fever. All that I can say from long personal experience—and the records of a score of years—is that their location could not possibly have been affected by climatic diseases of any kind. The few cases of malarious fever—occurring at long intervals—don't count at all, as being of a mild type, merely causing temporary annoyance to the people who are infected by this disease. The survivors of this outing soon became tired of pretending to be farmers, and, receiving aid from their fellow countrypeople abroad, were all removed to the Argentine. Such is the story of this venture as told to the author by a number of waifs and strays who still remain in other parts of South America.

The 'New Australia' social experiment, the only other effort to people these wilds with settlers of British race, being intended as an object-lesson to demonstrate the advantages of the common ownership of property and the establishment of a new social order, cannot be considered seriously as an instance of 'bona fide' colonization. The incentives which go to make pioneering the most interesting and attractive profession possible were all wanting. The freedom, individuality, personal initiative, security of tenure, and the glory of battle single-handed against the



hostile forces of nature, did not enter into their lives. The story savours more of a romance of the Elizabethan era than as a commonplace incident of the prosaic nineteenth century ; being an historical repetition of the voyage of the *Mayflower*, and the exodus of the Pilgrim Fathers from British shores. Such indeed must have been the origin of the idea. In the early nineties a serious financial and economic crisis caused a temporary panic in the Australian Colonies. Most of the banks suspended payment, pending reconstruction, and, for a time, business was almost at a standstill. Some one proposed the idea of founding a Communistic Colony in Paraguay ; and the romance of the venture caught on. Applications for membership poured in to the central office, mostly, I am afraid, from people who had not given much thought to the proposed social arrangements. According to the theory, all were to share and share alike in equality of labour and a brotherly distribution of wealth, to each according to their needs. A perfect Arcadia indeed, which will be surely realized some day—as the spontaneous result of universal courtesy and good breeding—in the distant by-and-by, when every man shall be a gentleman, and every woman a lady, in fact as well as in name. Our adventurers from the Antipodes were not quite up to this high standard of civilization. Their mental vision must have been

obscured by rude battles with the stern realities of life ; and, beyond the instinct of self-preservation urging them to take a leap in the dark in the hope of escaping the real or fancied evils of their surroundings, they had no earthly conception of the complexities of the problem they had set out to solve. It is much easier to point out the evils of modern society than to find a practical remedy.

However, amongst the motley assemblage of clerks, mechanics, labourers, miners, and adventurers—experienced pioneers being mostly conspicuous by their absence—who gathered together in Sydney, there happened to be a journalist who fancied he had a call to play the part of a latter-day prophet and leader of men in South American backwoods. Moses would once more lead the chosen people to the new Palestine, where he himself, as guide, philosopher, and friend, would rule as a beneficent despot, cruel or selfish only when his personal authority or precedence was questioned. He drew up a Constitution whereby his personal administrative power was to be supreme for an indefinite period—after which a change might be made upon the vote of a two-thirds majority. A beneficent despotism, wisely and humanely exercised, might be a great thing—if we could only get it. This amiable theorist really had his opportunity to play the man. The *Royal Tar*, a smart little



CALLE PALMAS, ASUNCION.





sailing vessel, was bought and equipped for the voyage out. The modern pilgrims numbered in their ranks a sufficient number of handy men to put up the necessary fittings for a large number of passengers. Crowds of people came off to watch their progress—and the daily press published long articles descriptive of this curious development in Colonial history. After a quick but uneventful passage the modern *Mayflower* arrived at Monte Video, carrying a strong contingent of men, women, and children, who were at last to realize a modern Utopia in distant Paraguay. From thence the Argonauts were transhipped to a river steamer, en route for Asuncion. On arrival at this capital, they were received with enthusiasm by a warm-hearted populace ; and the Government granted them a hundred square leagues of country, immediately north of the Villa Rica district, upon easy colonization conditions. The climate—as proved by the experience of some thousands of these people—was not unpleasant, and decidedly healthy ; the soil rich and fertile, with a peculiarly advantageous distribution of forest and prairie, giving to each settler the combined resources of wood and pasture lands. The rainfall was sufficient without being excessively wet. Supposing this movement had been based upon ordinary pioneering principles, we might have seen some hundreds of thousands of Anglo-Australian colonists established in

comfortable homes there to-day. The impetus had been given, and all eyes were upon the matured developments of this remarkable pioneering venture. The *Royal Tar* soon brought a second contingent from Australia ; and the Colonial Authorities were for a time seriously alarmed at the growing proportions of the exodus. At this stage, dissensions occurred amongst the first settlers. The dictatorial methods and evident incapacity of their self-constituted leader led to a disruption, and the would-be prophet, in a fit of temper, retired to another part of the country with a faithful few, to practise, in all grades, beneath that of the President, the Communistic virtues of self-effacement and blind obedience. The first settlement attempted for some years to carry along upon Communistic lines. Mob rule exercised at week-end meetings had undisputed sway. The officials were changed at the caprice of a majority upon an average once a month. The unholy muddle which resulted can be better imagined than described.

In past history we read of scores of similar experiments developing like symptoms ; jealousy, mutual suspicion, bickerings, and the impossibilities of finding capable men willing to take up or endure the cross of leadership. Each and every one thinks he knows a better way of doing things in his own department than any one else, and expresses his opinions to all

and sundry freely. He feels very much ill-used at not having his own way in everything; the foreman also being equally disgusted at the outspoken criticisms of his unruly, undisciplined workmen. The power to reward, punish, or discharge for insubordination being lacking, the result is anarchy pure and simple.

For some years this Colony struggled along on Communistic lines, living roughly, and making no material progress, the exodus of old settlers always exceeding the influx of enthusiastic newcomers. Finally, in despair of achieving success, the few who were left dissolved partnership in the society, liquidated, and started on individual lines. Some realized upon their share of the assets and returned home. The remnant—mostly new to pioneering of this kind—being left without capital, made a half-hearted struggle for existence, growing their own food-stuffs until their sources of revenue came in, and breeding a few cattle. Something like a score of families still remain in their old colony—half of whom are running native stores, the original hundred leagues of country which were allotted to the colonists being now mostly occupied by Paraguayan settlers. The other off-shoot of this colony attempted to colonize a few leagues of territory near Caazapa. These people being more enthusiastic, or perhaps one should say more faithful disciples of the would-be beneficent despot, made rather



a better show than the original settlement ; but the inevitable fate of like social ventures gradually overtook them, and, at the present date, only some twelve or fifteen families remain on the ground, having reverted to their original status as individual members of a competitive state of society. The benevolent autocratic leader is now earning his bread once more as a journalist on the staff of a Conservative paper in New Zealand. When, in case of disappointment and failure, people revert to extremes, it is an infallible indication of the mental calibre of the persons who have developed such mental eccentricities.

In this manner ended an enterprise which might easily have afforded scope for millions of the British race, in the conversion of the waste lands of nearly half a continent into smiling homesteads. By way of contrast to the blistering sunshine and arid brown plains of the Antipodes, all were delighted with the perpetual verdure, the orange groves of green and gold and the charming vistas of wood and meadowland, merging into primaeval forests in the north-east of the Republic. The jaguars and Indians who were to have chawed them up, according to the effusions of the daily press, were conspicuous by their absence ; while the native settlers in their neighbourhood, who might have been expected to resent this wholesale intrusion of foreigners, exercised a commendable



regard for the lives and properties of the colonists, who were quite unprotected and unarmed even during a local revolution—covering the best part of a year.

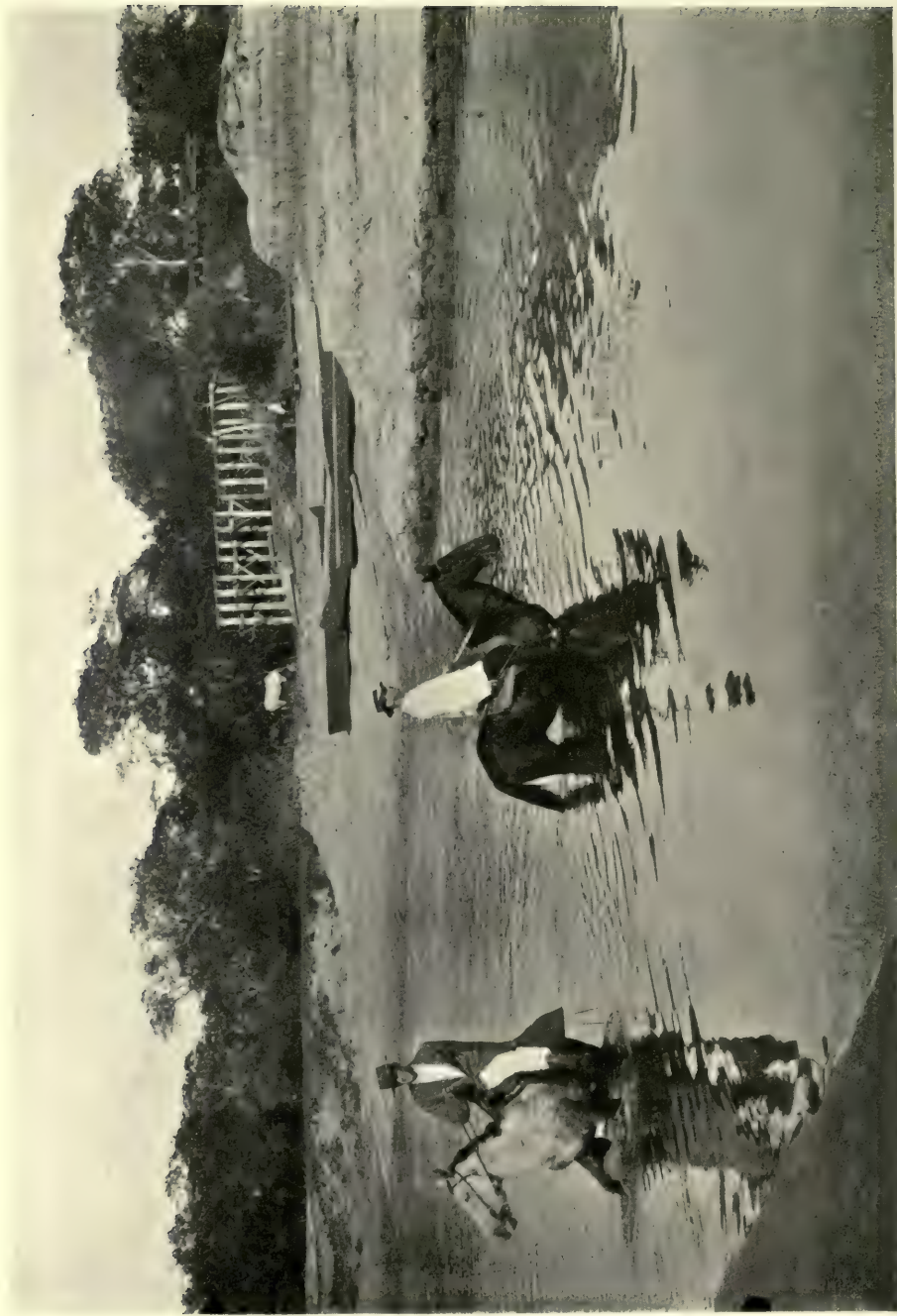
No economic advantage can be gained by co-operation in the rude operations of pioneering in a forest country. Indeed, it is safe to say that no sound co-operation can exist in any stage of society, except in free competition with individual enterprise. The liberty of the individual can only safely be curtailed at the point where that freedom infringes the equal rights of any other. In that case liberty has degenerated into license. People of fiery, passionate, impetuous temperament cannot with advantage be yoked to those of slow, dull, or phlegmatic dispositions.

The highest and best social ideals can only be realized by the fullest and most complete development of the individuality of the units, so that each varied character reacts upon the other for the creation of new thought, and new ideas. In fact this is the main distinction between man and the lower forms of creation. Every animal—or insect—each of their kind, as our friends the Spanish would say, is just as much like the other as one drop of water is like another drop of water. Supposing a state of compulsory communism were possible, and all men and women passed their lives from the cradle to the grave in a common environment, in the course of time their

physique and mentality would approximate as much the one to the other as that of the members of a flock of sheep browsing the pasturage in the fields, and in a few generations their brain capacity would come down to the level of the woolly-backs. All human progress tends towards the accentuation of differences of intellect and personality. Out of all the billions upon earth, who ever saw two men or women of like countenance or form?







BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, RIO PIRAPO.



## CHAPTER XIX

### WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR BOYS?

THERE is no doubt whatever that the crying evil of the times is the trend of modern society towards the towns. From this primary cause depends most of the social evils of the age.

By the compulsion of circumstances—or misplaced ambition—every one wants to be a lawyer or a doctor, a parson or a clerk, or, at least, a ‘counter-jumper’ in a shop ; so that they may strut about with a collar and a tie, conspicuous upon a background of immaculate shirt-fronts, with nicely starched white cuffs to protect their slender wrists. That is, some of them. Many, perhaps most, really detest the hateful necessity of thus wasting the sterling manhood which should be their heritage. For this state of things, their parents and the State are largely to blame. Even away out in South America, where natural opportunities are practically free to all, I have seen poor coloured people making pathetic sacrifice of their prospects

and lives in order that their sons might go to swell the ranks of wage-earners in the cities, when at their very doors Nature is calling out on every hand for honest labour and the highest form of intelligence to develop her virgin resources. But in vain. It would be *infra dig.* to soil one's hands with useful work of any kind. The poor beggars have a bad time of it. It is needless to recapitulate the host of evils which go far to make the workers' life a most unhappy one—the lack of scope, indignities, arbitrary authority, monotony, ungratified ambition and indoor confinement, which hopelessly bar the way to full mental and physical development. Take even the best of our professions, the healing art; every one knows how difficult it is for even the first of our doctors to retain his character as a gentleman if he is dependent upon his fees for a living. Anyway, from the social point of view, agriculture comes first of all. If history is to be relied upon, Adam, our first ancestor, was a gardener. The farmer—if he owns the land he cultivates—oweth allegiance to no man. He always contributes to society at least a just equivalent for the benefits he derives from the community—the first characteristic of a gentleman in any age or nation. Even the common farm labourer has quite a host of accomplishments, a fine accuracy of sight and touch, backed up by a shrewd knowledge of the elements of life, which the

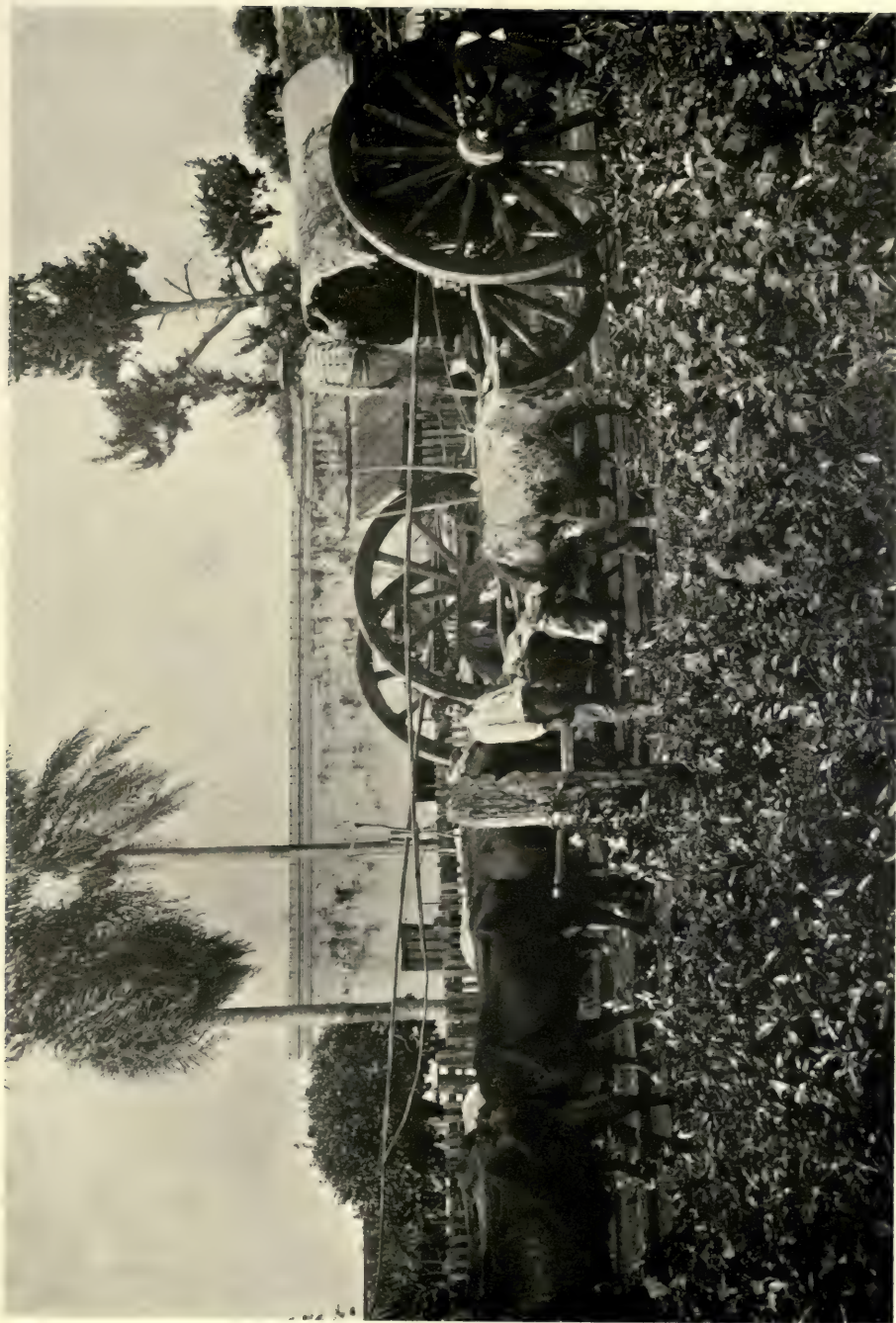
refined and cultured townsman—playing at farming—only begins to appreciate at their full value mostly after having lost all his money in trying in vain to realize what he calls the simple life.

Agriculture, theoretically and practically, is the most highly skilled profession in life, of which no one can realize the scope from the cradle to the grave. There are always fresh fields of knowledge to be conquered, and corresponding rewards to the happy discoverer. It is far better fun working a pair of lively horses, or driving an agricultural motor, than sitting the livelong day upon a stupid office-stool. The most famous of our professional men—doctors, artists, great generals, and politicians—after a life of strenuous activity, all agree with the correctness of this dictum. The life is wholesome and natural. In pioneering, the youngster has free scope for all-round development, and gets his fair share of the best forms of manly sport—from elephant and lion hunting in Benguela, tiger hunting in the Central Provinces or Assam, down to good old fox hunting in dear old England. The free out-of-door life, the continuous exercise of mind and body, and a constant readiness for emergencies of any kind, tends to produce a good all-round man who can stand squarely up to any of the four winds of heaven ; and the nation which has the most of him is that which will survive in the future struggle for existence. He

represents the sturdy national unit of the race upon whom we must rely in danger of any kind from commercial competition down to the last arbitration of Fate, where he lies out on the open veldt with his trusty rifle at his side for the defence of his native land. We have had to learn to our cost that uncultured Boer farmers had a shrewd knowledge of woodcraft which enabled them to out-general our trained strategists, whose hands were tied as mere units in a huge military machine; and their rude, undisciplined soldiery were more than a match for our men in the ranks. For the simple reason that the former were always free; while the latter had been hedged around with restrictions from the time of their birth. The yeomen of old England won all her battles in the past, and the constant infusion of fresh country blood into her great cities has given success to our latter-day more complex life. Let us beware that this source of strength be not exhausted.

But the scope of this chapter is really intended more to divert the stream of agricultural emigration from the somewhat played-out temperate zones to the tropics, where there is absolutely no competition worthy of the name. All the world over—in these regions—the ordinary implement for cultivation is the hoe; or, at best, a rude forked stick used as a plough. Any young fellow who learns the rudiments





TIMBER-CARTS -- ALL WOOD WHEELS.



of practical agricultural methods in England, the United States, or the Colonies cannot go wrong. It is a little known fact, but at one period in history we were well started on the way to people the beautiful West Indian islands with settlers of the white race. In the palmy days of the sugar business, when land was worth £100 per acre in Barbadoes, there were quite a number of small white planters—called, at the time, ten-acre men. By the use of a pony and light plough, even in those times of rude implements of husbandry, they were able to do as much as a score of black slaves—with our up-to-date cultivating implements of to-day, we may safely say from fifty to a hundred. Here lies the white man's opportunity. In Barbadoes the success of these small holders provoked the jealousy of the big planters, who bought them out at any price, as opportunity offered. This avarice and short-sighted policy was the ruin of the islands; as, with the abolition of the slave-trade, industry came to an end. So, as a result we have now a black West Indies, where millions of our own people should have been established to-day.

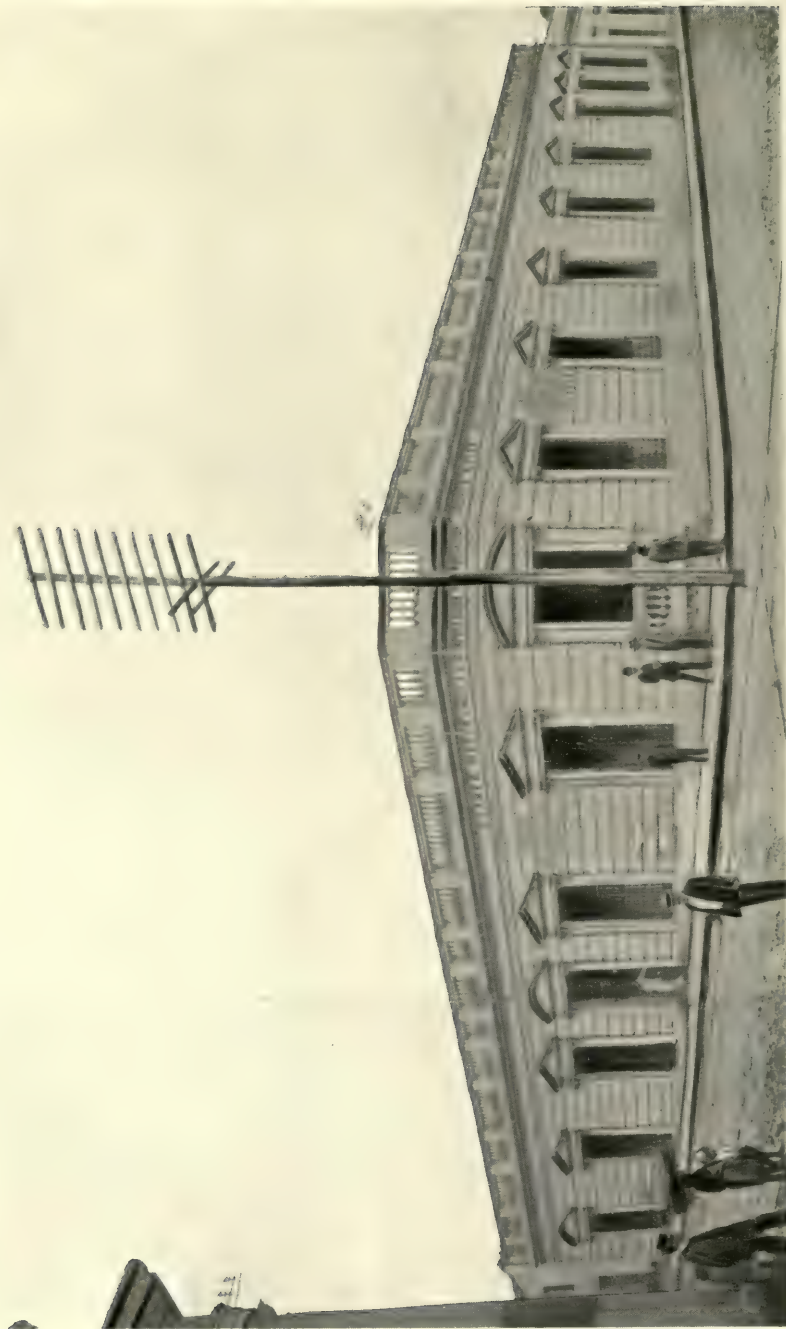
In other chapters I have shown that, with a certain amount of care during the first year of acclimatization, there is nothing to fear from the effects of climate. In my experience, extending over a score of years in hot countries, the white man can endure the heat better

than any of the coloured natives of the tropics. That is, if he leads a normal healthy life. After further experiment, I hope later on to publish a specific for the worst ills to which mankind is liable in the tropics.

It must, however, be strictly understood that, in the absence of the successful demonstration of advanced agricultural methods, the youngster must first practically learn his business in a civilized country. As to where he eventually locates himself, it is hardly necessary to indicate. The wide belt of tropics and sub-tropics all around the globe offer unlimited scope. Most will naturally prefer to settle under the flag. Others will place their stakes in a foreign land, still doing the Fatherland inestimable service in the way of extension of trade, political influence, and prestige. It may be said that the farmer's wife would have a dull time of it. Well, we cannot, as yet at all events, have everything we want in this world. But a really well-educated, healthy girl can adapt herself to circumstances and still have a fairly good time—certainly far happier than that of the peevish, worried, bored-to-death, fair citizens of what is called high society in our modern towns; in fact, such people break loose whenever they can, and lead the very life I am advocating. In any case, it is often possible to initiate group settlements—with either village sites or small homestead holdings—where all social and any desirable







CRAMER AND WEYER, MERCHANTS, ASUNCION.

co-operative advantages may be enjoyed to the full almost as completely as in any town. Care must be taken in the form of village associations ; but schools, postal arrangements, distributive stores, &c., are almost essential. Sometimes common ownership of irrigation plant, milling machinery, or expensive agricultural implements may be desirable, or compulsory. In this manner most of the hardships and privations of the pioneering life may be obviated ; but it must never be forgotten that every Communistic experiment on record has failed ignominiously. Such institutions, to be stable, must evolve in a natural way in free competition with existing institutions.

I hold no brief for South America. Every acre of land I own there is under intense cultivation, and I hope to buy more—as cheaply as I can—for the extension of my business. But it is only fair to say that, in this part of the world, land is cheap, and one may easily follow the hobby of one's choice, from growing rubber on the Amazon tributaries, sugar or cotton in the Chaco, fruit, rice, and sugar-cane in Paraguay, cattle in Corrientes, wheat or maize in Santa Fe or Buenos Ayres, down to herding the woolly-backs in Patagonia or Tierra del Fuego.

The moral is, then, teach your boy to be a happy, healthy farmer. The soil is calling out for him, even in your misty old England. His children and children's

children will possess the land for ever. Dynasties may rise and fall, effete civilizations will come and go ; but, like his first prototype, the ' Fellah ' on the banks of the Nile, the agriculturist will go on for ever. He may see just as much of the towns as is good for him ; and all the most important advantages of civilization may easily be carried out to his happy homestead in the beautiful country. He need not be servile to either millionaire or social magnate, and may hold up his head before kings in the consciousness of being a better, a happier and more fortunate man. Teach your daughters music and drawing to refine and elevate their souls, but don't forget that a knowledge of cooking and housecraft comes first in the line of duty ; and an interesting study of the principles and practice of medicine will enable them to prevent or cure most of the ills to which flesh is heir. For intellectual development—and the practical service of humanity—this branch of learning is infinitely more interesting, instructive, and useful than a study of Euclid or the classics. Life is too short to be wasted in adornments of this kind to the neglect of the first principles of practical education. Any average boy or girl of sixteen may easily know as much of the common infirmities of mankind as comes within the scope of the ordinary practitioner ; and being at the fountain-head, and knowing what to do, may take the precautionary



measures to eradicate disease entirely from the category of human ills. To attain this eminently practical and desirable consummation, it is merely necessary to break away from tradition, the greatest enemy of the race. What was good enough for our fathers and mothers is not sufficient for the people of the twentieth century, with the glorious heritage of past ages of work and knowledge for guidance in the future.



## A VILLAGE BELLE

---

Many of the daughters of Paraguay—out in the country—lead an ideal life, as far as health is concerned. She usually gets up at daylight in the morning and trips away to the nearest market, with a basket of fruit or vegetables upon her head, thinking nothing of carrying her burden several miles on the way to town. With shoulders squared and head erect, she inhales the fresh morning air with the delight of perfect life. Arrived in town, she does a pleasant gossip, disposes of her wares, buys a few pounds of meat and groceries—and flits away home with a good appetite for the homely meal which has been prepared by the old grandmother, who was left in charge of the house. Then she goes to the spring to wash her clothing, or, perhaps, to hoe the weeds in the family cultivation patch. A siesta in the middle of the day, and then the pounding of maize in a wooden mortar, for the evening repast. The use of the heavy wooden pestle strengthens the muscles of the arms and chest, and provides a splendid breathing exercise. Later on the cows are milked, supper partaken of by the simple folk, and away to bed—unless there is a dance at a neighbour's, when she tricks herself out in her finery, as we see her here, and no doubt enjoys her outing just as much in her own way as My Lady X—in pearls and diamonds—at a social entertainment in the West End. If the peasant girl's soul was looked after as well as her body, she might then have a really good time. Unfortunately, even in this matter Lady X is sometimes no more spiritual than our peasant girl in the backwoods.







## CHAPTER XX

### A WEEK IN THE WOODS

FROM the holiday-maker's point of view, few countries are less known to the average English tourist than this same bonny little Republic, away in the heart of the South American backwoods. Yet for the bona-fide sportsman, with an ardent love of nature, as distinct from the mere amateur butcher or trophy hunter, the attractions compare favourably with many better known shooting-grounds, especially when the question of expense or possible risk to health is taken into consideration. Some half-dozen varieties of deer are obtainable—the jaguar, tapir, puma, ostrich, two classes of peccary, and quite a host of smaller game. The difficulties to be encountered in walking your game up in a primaeval forest, together with the retiring habits of the animals themselves, give an additional incentive to the ordinary charm of wandering in the woods. The landscape, too, is everywhere pretty ; sometimes—at certain seasons—even beautiful ; while

the variety and wealth of foliage in the forests is unequalled outside of the American tropics. The climate is remarkably healthy ; and, for six or eight months in the year, it is a pleasure to bask in the sunshine. The somewhat humid heat of the summer is enervating only in degree—as people happen to lead more or less sedentary lives. The abundance of good, wholesome food-stuffs mainly contributes to this satisfactory result. The writer's conclusions are tempered by the experience of half a lifetime, mostly spent in sport, pioneering, and travel, in wild countries. To give an idea of the sport obtainable, even in a comparatively settled district, I will give a brief sketch, descriptive of a week's outing, during one of my periodical holidays.

Mounting our horses at my little plantation, we passed around the outskirts of Villa Rica township, lying amongst pleasant orange groves and grassy lanes. Then taking the road leading north, we wound in and out between native clearings and rustic cottages, thatched with grass over their timber frames and red clay walls. Palms and orange groves were very much in evidence, while here and there a stretch of open prairie diversified the scenery. An undulating country alternated by high ridges and grassy plain stretched away to the forest-clad Cordilleras, some ten miles to the right. On our way we passed the pretty little

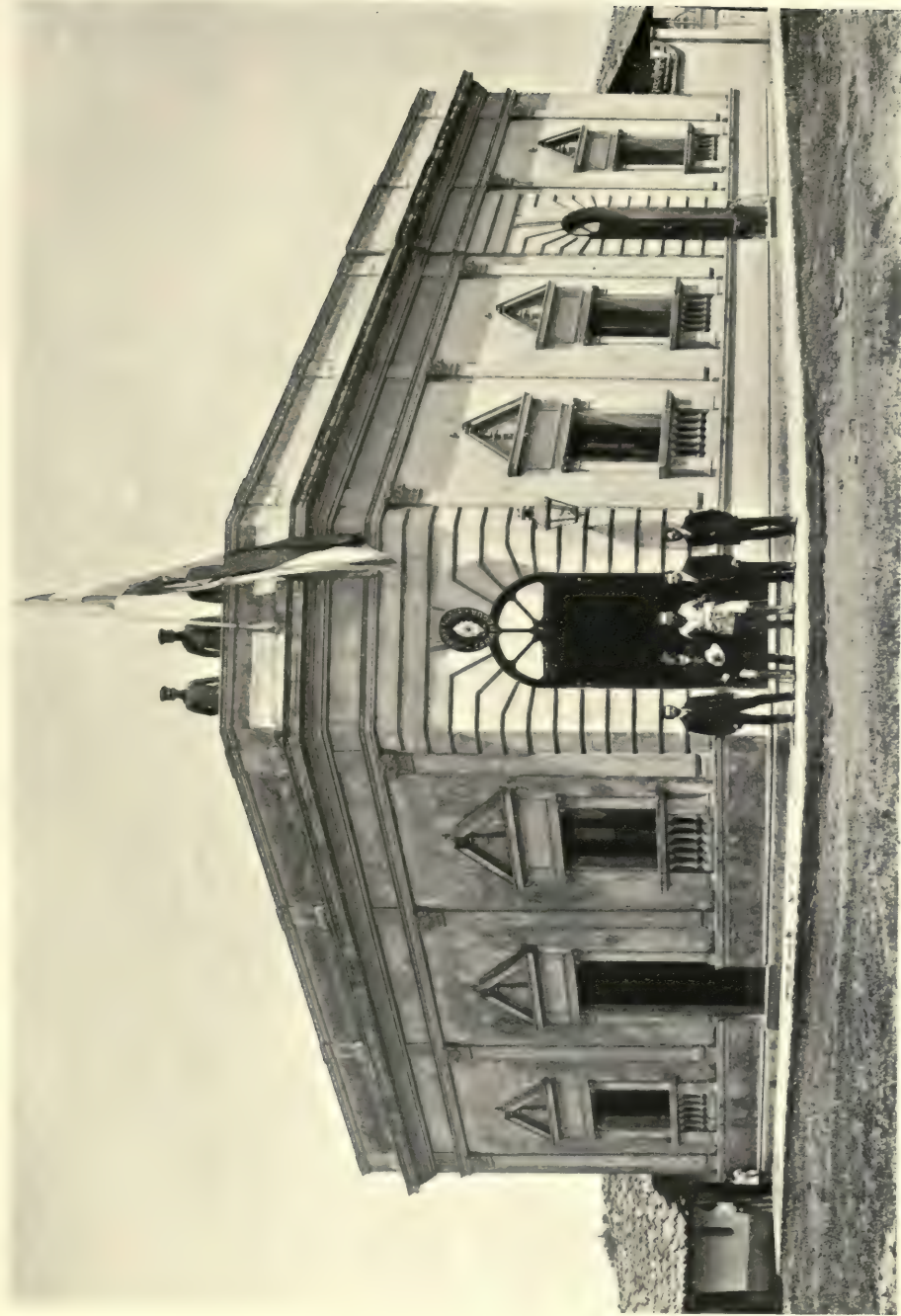
village of Oviedo, mostly consisting of a simple square with church and houses facing a well-kept lawn. Thence we saw the serpentine course of the Tebicuary-mi mapped out by a fringe of dark wood, in contrast with the verdant prairie, through which the stream takes its course. Once across the river the population becomes very much sparser and the primæval forests are practically untouched by the hand of man. Only now and again we find a peasant squatter located on the face of the wood, with a couple of acres cleared for the production of his food-stuffs. An old Southerner—a veteran of the civil war in the United States—irreconcilable to the last, had settled here on a fine little estancia. The view of the homestead, as evidence of culture and refinement, was really a treat to please the eye in these solitudes. The old man had erected a lofty tower so as to be able thoroughly to enjoy the local scenery.

The remainder of our journey lay for another fifteen miles between more or less typical expanses of forest and plain. Finally, I took up my quarters at the hospitable residence of a friend engaged in cattle-ranching in a small way. Strange are the vicissitudes of fortune. Here was a descendant of the old turbulent Scottish nobility who had fought at Bothwell Brig, and many another hard-fought field, peacefully herding his cattle—like any common

'gillie' of the olden times. And wherefore not? It is one of the best lives he could have chosen. It is hard indeed to retain one's manliness and breeding in the struggle of modern competition.

Well, as a typical Britisher, I had come out to kill something, as well as to a-gipsying in the woods. So the next morning, I got into my war-paint and entered the forest in search of game. That means, having, by a somewhat painful process of patience and perseverance, acquired the enviable capacity of walking barefoot, I discarded most of my scanty costume, and consequently was able to follow a trail as noiselessly as any of the best Indian scouts in Fennimore Cooper's or Captain Mayne Reid's novels. A familiarity with the signs of the woods soon told me that deer and pigs were fairly numerous. But, by way of chance, it was some hours before I eventually came upon a herd of the latter. The first evidence of the enemy was whiff of scent from the musk gland of an excited porker. Following up the indications as quietly as possible, I soon espied the greyish-black form of one fellow in the brushwood. A charge of buck-shot in the head settled his business; but, for a moment, the forest was pandemonium. A surly boar gnashed his tusks, and made a nasty demonstration of fighting it out with the intruder; so I had to give him his quietus also, much to my regret, as one was





POLICE MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE, CARAPEGUA.



a sufficient load for any man to carry out. No one more strongly disapproves of the reckless slaughter of game, than the old hunter—although he is often supposed to be the principal offender. The larger variety of peccary goes in large herds up to a couple of hundred in a band. They often refuse to scatter when one of their comrades is killed, and any unlucky jaguar who pounces upon one of these fellows stands a good chance of being promptly torn to pieces. In such cases the hunter usually takes to a tree to avoid useless slaughter and the very considerable risk of being chawed up. A former British Consul here had a rather exciting experience on one occasion with a troop of piggies, who had no more respect for his Britannic Majesty's representative than any other biped.

The following day I made a special effort to get one of the beautiful red forest deer. Taking extra precautions to avoid making the slightest noise, I soon got a snap-shot at a very fine specimen, and was fortunate enough to secure it at the first shot. The cover is so thick that unless an animal is mortally wounded, he will often escape to die in some remote fastness. Sufficient for the day is one deer, particularly if one has to carry him home for a mile or so on one's shoulders. A day later I obtained yet another, under almost identical circumstances. The venison of these

Paraguayan deer is the best in the world, being very fine in the grain, as well as remarkably tender and sweet. Like most animals in the tropics, they never put on superfluous fat. The other most common forest deer is much smaller—of a greyish-brown colour, extremely shy and retiring in its habits, and so cunning that it pretty well holds its own with the increase of population, feeding at night in the native clearings. The antlers remain in the form of spikes without further development, the males carrying a sharp horn about four inches in length. A large red deer keeps exclusively to the prairies, usually in unfrequented swampy districts, and in certain parts may be found in fairly large herds. The antlers are rather smaller than those of the English red deer. Evolutionists might argue with equal consistency either that the spiked deer was enabled to take to the forest life 'because' its antlers would not get entangled, or that the prairie deer diminished in bulk and gradually lost its points in the effort to adapt itself to a strange environment. Against the latter supposition stands the fact that an antlered deer would become extinct in a year amongst the vines of a tangled South American forest; and that although the spiked deer 'might' live on the prairies, his brother of the plains could not possibly exist under the altered conditions of life in the woods. The writer has bagged at different



times four varieties of the former and two of the latter.

For jaguar hunting, dogs are indispensable, as otherwise the beast slinks off unperceived, and one gets a sight of him only by a chance encounter. I have had several unsatisfactory experiences of watching for these cats, which resulted only profitably for the mosquitoes.

Regarded as an opening for pioneering, this part of Paraguay is an ideal country for well-educated young fellows with sporting tastes and a love of nature, or practical agriculturists with a sufficiency of capital to tide over the initial difficulties of pioneering. A few thousand pounds will give quite a big start in cattle ranching, and a careful youngster may even lay the foundations of a future competence with a much smaller sum. The rustic has no place yet, unless a sufficient number combine to form a small community of their own; as, having no resources within himself, he would die of monotony in a year, or become extinct by assimilating with the natives. Breeding-cows may be bought at about thirty shillings to two pounds per head if purchased by the herd; and land is still cheap. Revolutions are rarely heard of outside the capital, and any faults of the Government—such as they are—do not much affect the foreign colonist. There is absolutely no opening for any *considerable number of*

*people* other than the class I have indicated—agriculturists or pastoralists who love the life for its freedom and sport, and who find compensation for the artificialities of civilization in a free, out-door life and the study of nature in a land of sunshine and beauty.









## BANANA PLANTATION—EXTERIOR

---

By the expenditure of scores of pounds in Paraguay one may secure effects in the way of beautiful scenery which could not be obtained in Europe for as many thousands. A well-cultivated banana plantation is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever to any one with an eye for the artistic. In this case, the view depicts a hedge which grew up spontaneously, with a few orange-trees and a banana-grove in the background. The condition of the cows and horses in the picture demonstrates the high feeding value of banana forage, which is obtained in enormous quantities incidentally in the ordinary cultivation of the fruit. These lands have been cultivated more or less continuously—without the addition of fertilizers—for a couple of hundred years, and still retain their primitive fertility. Old flint weapons and broken pieces of pottery are frequently turned up by the plough to attest the former occupation of more primitive races of mankind. At a later date, the first Dictators, Francia and Lopez, established State cotton-fields in this district worked by forced labour exacted from the local residents, who were compelled to work for three days in the week for the Government. Of course this state of affairs ceased to exist with the establishment of constitutional Government. Metal being scarce in those days, the shoulder-blade of an ox was fastened into a wooden handle and used as a hoe; much the same as one may still see amongst the natives of Central Africa, who have from time immemorial used wooden hoes for purposes of cultivation, or, in some cases, a wooden substitute for a spade—weighted at the top with a cylindrical stone, to give force to the blow. Nevertheless, in spite of the enormous strides in mechanical invention, it is doubtful if the modern farmer has more leisure than his prototype of the backwoods, for the simple reason that he does not eat the produce of his labour, and in the way of exchange must provide food for some hundreds of other people as an equivalent for his luxuries and artificiality of life.

## CHAPTER XXI

### FRUIT RANCHING

IF there is any well-recognized question of vital importance in England to-day, it is the problem of how to provide suitable openings for the surplus population of the Empire. The Colonies and North America, of course, give scope for a limited number. But in those countries, the days of sure and speedy success as the reward of intelligence and industry have to a great extent gone by ; and the chances of life in the British possessions abroad are more equalized with those of the Mother Country. It is true that trade follows the flag ; but it is also equally true that trade also follows the emigration of British subjects to foreign lands, where they act as living advertisements for their country's wares. The stream of emigration has been very much confined by the vulgar error that the white man can neither work nor transmit his energy to a robust posterity in the tropics. The degeneracy of the European, when we find that state

of affairs in hot countries, may be traced to the same cause all the world over: effeminacy and unnatural living, or from more or less preventable diseases caused by insect pests, which are by no means peculiar to the tropics. In Northern Australia, the white man performs the hardest of hard labour in the mines and plantations in one of the hottest climates in the world, and, at one time, in Barbadoes and several of the other West Indian islands, white peasant proprietors successfully competed with slave labour on the plantations; until they were eventually bought out by the wealthy planters, who could ill brook a rivalry of this kind. However it be, the best part of the world still lies awaiting the plough of the agriculturist. Thanks to cheap land, any young fellow—with the right grit in him and a capital of £200 to £500—may still make a good start in the way of making a beautiful home for himself in Paraguay. Once he learns how to put horse labour on to his plough and cultivator, he need not fear the competition of the cheapest labour in the world. One horse, however small and weedy, will get over more ground in a single morning than ten men can clean with their hoes in a week; and the hoe is the only implement of the ignorant agriculturist right through tropic America. The labour of putting forest clearings under cultivation, by the methods described in another chapter, is not really very arduous

compared with the results to be obtained afterwards. The only real drawback is that of society. This can always be overcome by group settlement. If the life entails some little hardship and sacrifice, we certainly have compensation in not being bored to death by the vulgarities and conventionalities of modern civilized life.

In the near future, now that through railway communication to Buenos Ayres is an accomplished fact, the banana will do for Paraguay what it has already done for the accessible parts of the West Indies and Central America. Millions of bunches are now exported every year to the United Kingdom and North America. In the rapidly progressing population of the Argentine there is a practically unlimited market. Naturally, plantations must be located within easy reach of the railway, to secure rapid facilities for transport. The total cost of land and laying out a plantation for the first year need not very much exceed seven or eight pounds an acre, and much of this might be recouped by the sale of firewood, charcoal, and catch-crops. During the second year at least £10 an acre should be realized by the sale of bananas. That sum would be doubled the third year, and finally trebled during the fourth season, when the plants should be in full bearing. That is, assuming that the plantation was laid out properly in a suitable





A WHOLESALE WAREHOUSE :  
BRUN AND CO., IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION.



district, and worked on economical lines. The railway authorities look forward to a large trade in this business, and have promised to make special arrangements for the quick and safe delivery of fruit in the Buenos Ayres market. The banana is one of the most prolific of fruits, bearing all the year round ; but the maximum number of bunches are obtained from January to June, decreasing in size and quantity during the winter months and spring. The suckers should be planted in rectangular lines about four yards apart, so as to permit of cross cultivation at alternate cleanings up. For commercial purposes, the only successful variety so far introduced to Paraguay is the 'Banana de Oro'—a medium-sized variety, very hardy and frost-resisting ; the fruit being remarkably sweet, and, owing to some conditions of soil or climate, much sweeter than the same variety in Brazil or East Africa. The dried fruit is more than an excellent substitute for preserved figs ; and the dried banana is already being stocked by many London provision dealers.

After the second year the huge spreading leaves of the plant largely shade the ground and cultivation is somewhat simplified. But it is essential to keep the surface soil clean and loose by running a horse cultivator through the lines every month or six weeks, to admit the air and moisture, so as to set free new

elements needed for plant life. Otherwise, results will be unsatisfactory. It is always well to combine a dairy farm with such a plantation, because the stem, after the fruit has been removed, is excellent fodder for live stock of every kind. Being fibrous, it must be cut up in short discs, not more than an inch long, and then split up in cubes—otherwise, the animals cannot masticate it. If fed in boxes, there is no waste as with most forms of forage. Sometimes it may be necessary to sprinkle salt upon the cuttings, to induce new animals to taste it ; but, generally, they eat it greedily from the start, in the winter at all events. Although it may appear to be a nuisance to have to cut it up, yet any man or boy with a machete and a chopping-block can easily cut up as much in a couple of minutes as a horse or cow will eat in a day. I am not by any means sure that animals will eat the stems of all varieties of banana, as I have only proved the ‘ Banana de Oro ’ and the ‘ Cavendish.’ Working horses get into good, hard condition, but perhaps cows—if solely fed upon banana fodder—might require some stiffening in the shape of a small proportion of cracked maize or other cereal food. However, if stall fed only at night, and allowed to get a picking of grass during the day, no other food is necessary.

This discovery doubles the value of banana plantations all the world over. In fact, quite apart



from the fruit, the banana is the ideal forage plant of the tropics, giving a greater weight of fodder than any other plant known. In some countries the fibre is being made use of to some extent, particularly in China, where it has come into use as a cheap material for the making of rough clothing. So that we see in this case grace and utility are combined, as every particle of the beautiful plant is of use to man. In Central Africa, the banana and plantain have become the staff of life. On the sides of Mount Kilima-Njaro I have often seen bunches so large that it took two men to carry them along slung on to a pole. Over there they obtain a kind of meal by first fermenting the fruit and then drying it in the sun. It is not very palatable, but they appear to like it in the form of porridge and pancakes.

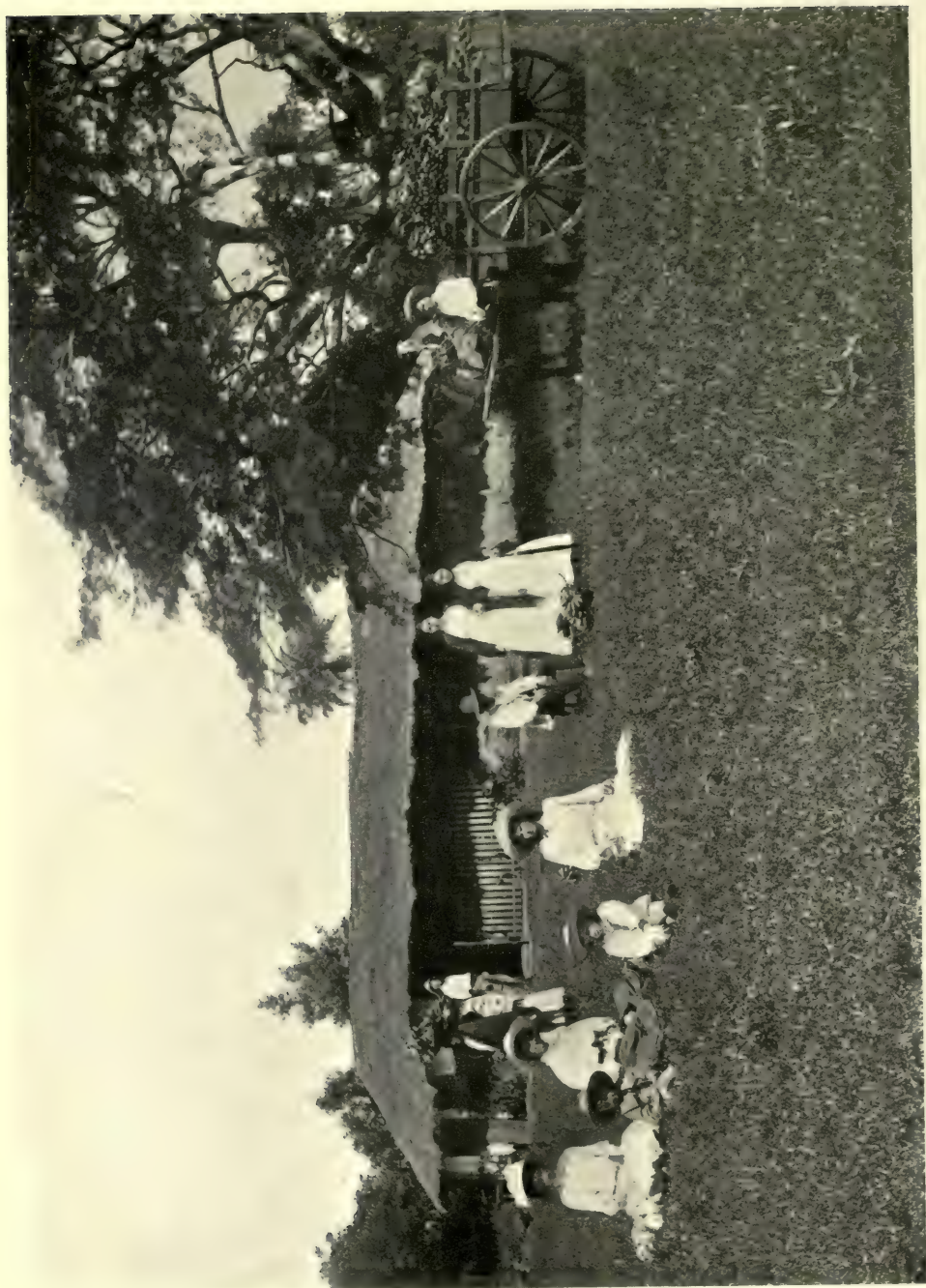
Where the market is good, banana-planting is quite an ideal occupation, most of the work being light and pleasant—except the stupid and unskilled labour of carrying out the bunches, and there are always plenty of men available for uncongenial work of this kind. At the moment of writing, there is talk of a company being formed to lay out plantations for newcomers—who would be well-established from the start and secure against the risk of losing their money for lack of experience during the critical period of first settlement.

For climatic reasons the area of banana country along the railway is only between Asuncion and Yuty, the Parana side of the watershed—in the south at all events—being too cold in the winter for that heat-loving plant.

Most authorities state that one may safely reckon upon getting three bunches of fruit from each clump per annum. This is quite correct for the tropics, but in the sub-tropics it is wiser to expect an average of only two—to be quite on the safe side, which comes out at 1,000 bunches per acre—if planted at four yards apart. This yield, of course, varies very much—according to the class of banana, the nature of the soil, aspect, altitude—and most important factor of all, the degree of cultivation.









## A FRUIT RANCH, VILLA RICA

---

With the almost immediate completion of the new railways, fruit ranching in Paraguay will be an ideal occupation for families with a sufficiency of capital to get well established. The owner of this plantation started business a few years ago with a twenty-pound note in his pocket, and a sound agricultural and pioneering experience during his early boyhood. He has now twenty-five acres under bananas, with a market garden and general cultivation patch. His children here depicted were all but one born in the country. Certain hardships, mostly in the way of social disadvantages, which existed in the past, are likely to be minimized in the near future ; and there are drawbacks of one kind or another incidental to pioneering all the world over. Here at least no one need be either cold or hungry or thirsty. Excessive heat is the exception rather than the rule. And even the horses gorge themselves to repletion upon oranges and guavas. A little trouble will produce a landscape worthy of a king's palace ; and a life in the open air in such a country will give dividends in the way of robust health and vitality quite beyond the reach of those engaged in sedentary occupations in the towns. Many of the artificialities of life will be dropped out ; but we cannot have all that we want in this world. In the backwoods at least we are spared the disappointment of seeing pleasures of a certain kind being placed beyond our reach for want of a sufficient supply of the all-mighty dollar. Strange to say, the pleasures of pioneering are better appreciated by the rich than by the poor—who have everything to gain from such a life.

## CHAPTER XXII

### SPORT IN CENTRAL SOUTH AMERICA

COMPARED with most countries—excepting, of course, India and Africa—there is fairly good hunting to be obtained in the Central districts of South America. The following notes of an outing in the country immediately north of the Ajos district will give some idea of the class of sport, although the shooting was only incidental, rather than the primary object of the expedition.

On our way we passed the deserted cattle ranch of one of the richest and most influential men in Paraguay during the first years of the war. The Estancia Guazu has a somewhat romantic and melancholy interest. The former owner—Varela—had the misfortune to be exceedingly popular, as also enormously wealthy. In the days of Lopez, either the one or the other qualification was enough to secure his fate. He was accused of conspiring with a view to securing the Presidential office for himself, thrown

into prison, and barbarously murdered without a trial of any kind. The treasure, however, was securely hidden away, presumably buried in the ground, and has, up to the present, remained undiscovered. Occasionally, people who believe in dreams put their faith to the test of practical experiment, and disfigure the face of nature by digging deep holes in various parts of the orange grove. Evidently dreams in Paraguay are as unreliable as elsewhere, for so far the treasure has yet to be unearthed. Nothing remains now of the old house, except a few wooden posts, which have resisted the ravages of time. Even the orange grove, after a lapse of forty years, has been quite surrounded by a forest of quick-growing trees. It is said that one man encamped near this spot for a whole year, trying his luck in the search for gold, then suddenly disappeared, probably murdered by bandits, who may have imagined that he had been successful in the quest. We halted here to refresh the inner man and lay in a stock of golden oranges.

From thence, our course now led away north into the *primaeval* solitude beyond. As we rode onwards, the rich-glowing colours of the tropics were bathed in sunshine. Many coloured butterflies flitted lazily from flower to flower. Gay plumaged birds of many kinds—from the tiny humming-bird up to the gorgeous macaw—sang the song of sylvan happiness, as they fluttered

from tree to tree. The sharp, mechanical tapping of the red-crested woodpecker, as he searched for his prey, could be heard in different parts of the forest, while the clear, ringing, metallic piping of the cicadae was continuous in all parts of the woods. From the top of a ridge near Varela's old house, a scene of singular beauty presented itself. The sluggish, serpentine course of the Leiva Arroyo wound in and out between the 'montes,' the clumps of wood dotted the soft undulating landscape, for all the world like little islands in a sea of verdure, giving the impression of a world in the process of drying up after a deluge. This alternation of 'monte' and 'campo' is one of the charming characteristics of Paraguayan scenery. Crossing the Arroyo, we skirted the banks of the Laguna Negra, really a deep stagnant water-hole, forming the extension of the creek we had just crossed, all outlet being blocked—except in flood time—by parasitic vegetation. Then, passing through a long-disused forest cutting, we arrived at the borders of the 'Laguna Grande.'

Still travelling north, we now traversed a narrow belt of prairie lying between the lagoon and the great forest. In an attempt to pass through the woods to the east, we were foiled and had to turn back, it being impossible to get the horses through the thick undergrowth. Just here we had a distant glimpse of



some animal moving about in the long grass away in front. Dismounting, I stalked him carefully, until within range. It proved to be a huge red wolf, having a good time on his account, hunting rats, or some other small animals. It was an interesting sight as, wholly unconscious of the presence of a human intruder, he took long bounds in pursuit of the little rodent, as most people have seen their domestic doggies leaping high in the air, with arched back and tail outstretched, to get a sight of a mouse in the straw. He appeared to be enjoying the sport thoroughly, and yelped with excitement. Every line of his body was a picture of grace, and the long black mane, standing erect, had a very fine effect, and gave him rather a majestic appearance. While I was watching these manoeuvres he caught a rat, and lay down to devour it at his leisure. I could just see the tip of his tail wagging with apparent satisfaction above the long grass. When he got up he must have winded me, for he made off. At the crack of the rifle he rolled over, snapping and growling most fearfully. The quick shot was rather low, and almost cut away one of the forelegs, just beneath the shoulder. Nevertheless, he scrambled off as best he could on three legs. The next shot turned him over. This kind of wolf is rather a fine looking animal, standing about three feet high at the shoulders. That night—from our camp—we heard

the roar of a jaguar near by, but did not get a sight of him.

The next day we kept on towards the north end of the lagoon. Just as we had tethered out our horses at a nice spot, two peccaries came out of the forest and crossed over towards the lagoon—rather an unusual occurrence, for the peccary rarely leaves the shelter of the wood. After a short stalk, I managed to bag the two in succession, with a quick right-and-left from my double-barrelled express. The following morning we also had luck, for a fine red deer passed along the coast of the lagoon, travelling northwards. By a sharp run, taking advantage of the undulating ground, I succeeded in heading him off ; but, instead of keeping straight on, as I had expected, he must have noticed the horses, and curiosity led him towards the camp. I was thus obliged to take a very long shot. Perhaps the long run had shaken my nerves, for the result was a clean miss. The second barrel was more successful although a shade low, breaking one foreleg just at the shoulder. The third shot gave him his quietus. That night we had a veritable hunting camp. Loins of venison and legs of pork were roasting on improvised spits—all around the fire.

There are five varieties of deer in Paraguay, three of which keep to the woods, and two frequent the open campos. The next day, taking a turn

in the woods, I had a glimpse of a red 'monte' deer, and taking a snapshot, sent a bullet through his heart.

In this same district I had a rather funny adventure one evening. In very thick 'monte' I raked the back of a peccary with a rifle bullet. He was inclined to have his revenge, and I had to prod him off with the barrel of the rifle, being disinclined to waste another cartridge over him. To get him out as comfortably as possible, I slung him over the left shoulder and trudged off in the direction of the camp. Getting into low scrub by the edge of the prairie, the rays of the setting sun, reflected from the scattered foliage—right into one's eyes—made it difficult to see distinctly. Suddenly, some uncouth, antediluvian form loomed up amidst the shrubs and fernery. There was no time for investigation. So, on the instant, I swung the rifle up to my shoulder—with one hand—and, taking aim somewhere about the centre of the creature, pulled the trigger. When the smoke cleared off, I found one of the great ant-bears of the country, with a good-sized young one clinging on its back, and peeping over its shoulder. I have shot quite a number of these creatures—always females. Strange to say, seemingly impossible on the face of things, all the Indians persist in saying there are no males, or that these animals are bi-sexual. I regret very much that



I did not hear of this curious fact in time to investigate the origin of the story.

There were many signs of tapir about. I have sometimes walked them up, but it is usually impossible to get a sight of the animals without dogs to run them into a water-hole. They have certain favourite paths in crossing about the country. This pachyderm has a strange antipathy to fire, but often overcomes his natural timidity, and stamps out camp fires at night, dancing about like a demon possessed of a legion of devils. The skin is highly prized for making bridle reins, and like purposes, on account of its strength.

Working homewards we managed to take a short cut—by riding through a tropical forest. Hordes of travelling ants sometimes routed us out at night. Although causing considerable annoyance for the time, these creatures are rather a blessing than otherwise, making a clean sweep of all noxious insects in their path. It is very funny to see them streaking off with their prizes; often two at a time, straddling a long caterpillar and running along like a four-wheeled timber-carriage with a log of timber underneath. The Hercules beetle also co-operates in pairs, the one rolling, while the other pushes a ball of excrement. The red leaf-eating ants have a very complex social organization, making tunnels, yards beneath the surface, for a radius of half a mile from the central



nest, connected by cross-roads, large air spaces, and numbers of ventilating holes, reaching up to the surface. A squad of leaf-cutters climb up amongst the branches, snipping off the tender shoots and freshest leaves, while the carriers pick them up and carry everything home.

They are the most exasperating sinners imaginable. While still new to the country, and not understanding the best methods of dealing with the pest, I had quite an experience in this branch of Natural History. One day, all of a sudden, they made a raid on a cabbage patch. In the way of retaliation, we scalded them with hot water, and filled up the holes with hot ashes. This treatment was repeated every time they appeared on the scene. Nothing daunted, the survivors always made new holes to connect with the main tunnels underneath. Finally, coming to the conclusion that marauding by daylight did not pay, at dusk every evening they were to be seen regularly peeping out to see if it was not dark enough to safely get to work upon the vegetables. In October the kings and queens develop wings and fly off—for a short honeymoon. Fortunately, almost all are devoured by insectivorous birds. Even the Indians gather up the egg sections of the females for use as food. The queens who escape the general slaughter lose their wings and burrow in the ground in the effort to found a new colony. These

again nearly all come to grief before establishing a nest.

There is a wonderful diversity of type in the ant. We have insectivorous, omnivorous, gramnivorous, grass-eating, leaf-eating, and exclusively wood-eating ants. Some live in the ground ; others make heaps of loose soil—or leaves—on the surface, while some of their distant cousins bore holes in wood. Certain varieties cement their dwellings with well-worked red clay, which bakes hard in the sun, while yet another makes a roof of thatch. Most wonderful of all—under careful analysis it will be found that the chemical constituents of the bodies of some different varieties show almost nothing in common. The Indians extract a very powerful poison from the red leaf-eater, using it to smear the points of their arrow-heads. It is at first curious to see long troops of these ants, marching along in single file each carrying a leaf over their heads, held perpendicularly between the mandibles. Bees are great in variety, rather than notable as industrious honey-gatherers. In the North some kinds produce a fair amount. European bees also are spreading out, as they escape from the apiaries ; but the timber is so wonderfully sound—except in the hills—that they mostly perish for want of a suitable nesting-place.







## BANANA PLANTATION—INTERIOR

---

The peon cutting bananas wanders up and down the long shady walks, selecting the ripest bunches for the market. His occupation is continuous and lasts for ever, because this wonderful plant has a succession of flowers and fruit, from one end of the year to the other, each bunch taking about four months to mature. Naturally we get the biggest average during the fall of the year, in response to the greater heat and moisture of the summer. A plantation is usually started with one sucker to each sixteen square yards. This original plant stools out from the root, fruits, and dies away only to be followed by a succession of similar plants in all stages of development until we often find clumps consisting of ten, twenty, thirty, or even forty stems, where there is rich soil and room for development. The foliage is marvellous. The young leaf is at first thrust upwards like a huge funnel to catch the rain and dew. In the course of a few days it grows to a length of a yard and half a yard wide, and then unfolds to drop and sway about everlastingly in the wind. The primary leaves gradually die off, until, after eight or nine months—according to climate and cultivation—one day in place of a conical leaf we see a huge blue flower thrust itself upwards, which exfoliates and, bending downwards with its weight, leaves six, eight, ten, or even twelve hands of baby bananas on the fruit stem behind it. Strange to say, the flower itself keeps on growing and exfoliating until the fruit is ripe. Indeed, occasionally a second bunch is sometimes fertilized on the same flower-stem, but cannot mature. Bees seek the banana flowers in the early morning, and thus gather quite a lot of honey.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### PROPOSED SOUTH AMERICAN CHARTERED COMPANY

As already indicated in preceding chapters, although there has always been a fairly good opening in Paraguay for a limited number of skilled agriculturalists to supply the local markets, yet, owing to a monopoly of the river service and bad customhouse arrangements, there was formerly no scope for anything like immigration on a large scale. It is true the new train service will do much to overcome these drawbacks and open up the country to the surplus population of Europe, but there is still another method of arriving at this eminently desirable consummation. In other parts of the world great companies have played no mean part in the history of our modern civilization, affording outlet for the enterprise of millions of industrious citizens, and even to the founding of solid Empires. So far, one of the finest fields of all has been strangely neglected. I allude to that enormous area in the heart of South America, watered by the tributaries of the

Rios Parana and Paraguay, comprising parts of the Republics of Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and the Argentine. Steamers drawing up to nine feet easily penetrate up to a thousand miles from the estuary of the River Plate, and the water frontage accessible to flat-bottomed river craft runs into at least a hundred thousand miles. Here we find millions of acres of very fine pastoral and agricultural lands, absolutely in a state of nature, devoted to the evolution of the 'tapir,' who might in billions of years become a horse—like his congener of the Pampas ; and troops of chattering monkeys, who may some day develop into bipeds, and, descending to the ground, perhaps employ their leisure in hacking down the very trees wherein they now disport themselves. In this country we find frequently a strange alternation of prairie and forest, comprising all the advantages and none of the disadvantages of similar tracts of open plain or unbroken wood in other parts of the world. But it must be understood that in this climate the growth of grass is continuous, the result being that, with insufficient stocking, the vegetation degenerates into rankness and decay. The only remedy practised is the primitive and destructive process of burning the grass in hot weather. The cattle, too, are the degenerate product of three hundred years of wilful neglect. The well-known law that, within certain limits, Nature always

responds to demands, is neither recognized nor taken advantage of. The consequence is that, neither times of scarcity nor inclemencies of the weather calling for a reserve of animal fat to mitigate the distress arising therefrom, we find a breed of cattle which has lost the capacity to lay on fat, even in the finest pastures in the world. Our Australian cousins remedy these defects by periodically importing male animals from cold climates, some discretion of course being necessary. The writer has observed a curious instance of the operation of this law in Somaliland, where a hot and dry climate has evolved a sheep with short 'hair' in place of wool. But the desert characteristics of the country, involving periodic scanty pasturage, have produced, in addition to the ordinary layers of fat common to the animals of the class, a large deposit upon the rump at the base of the tail. The effect of insect pests, in these plains, would disappear or be very much mitigated by systematic colonization. Rank grasses also would either be refined or replaced by other more suitable. Our drought-smitten pastoralists of the 'Never-Never' country in the Antipodes would like to hear of a land where the growth of grass is continuous, and I am sure their enterprise and ingenuity would soon find ways and means of obviating possible inconveniences arising therefrom. As to the forest wealth, we may safely say that nowhere in the



world do we find anything approaching the variety of woods, which might easily be placed upon the markets of the world. Indeed a plentiful supply of timber for any special purpose which can be mentioned can be obtained from almost any average league of 'monte' in these regions—timber suitable alike for a gun-stock or the frame of a piano.

From a large and varied experience of planting in this country, I am justified in saying that these lands—when cleared—are eminently suited for the cheap and easy production of most tropical and semi-tropical crops required in ordinary commerce. One might also state that such lands, when planted with suitable artificial grasses, give the heaviest weight of pasturage possible. In many districts the wild Indian is still in evidence; but experience has proved him to be exceedingly amenable to the influences of civilization—within the limits of his hereditary potentialities. There is a fair amount of game obtainable in the way of deer, pigs, tapir, &c. But some knowledge of woodcraft is necessary, backed up by an enthusiasm which makes light of the occasional discomforts of insect pests and bad travelling.

So much for the country. The scope of a company would be in the acquirement of large tracts of land—on colonization conditions—by way of concessions from the respective Governments of these Republics.

Also the establishment of an effective river service, connecting the settlements with Buenos Ayres or Monte Video. The blackmail incidental to transshipment could be avoided by establishing warehouses on the free zone at Buenos Ayres or Monte Video, as also by direct transshipment from the ocean steamers to the Company's privately owned river craft. Export expenses and port dues could be reduced to a minimum, for the simple reason that any Republic which declined to give facilities in these matters would simply be left to work out its own salvation as best it might. The total expenses might be covered in a short time by the sale of lands to suitable colonists. Any prejudice against the South American Republics would vanish before the prestige and protection afforded by the flag of a powerful company. And there is no doubt that experienced pioneers with sufficient capital would flock in from Australia and North America in their thousands. Brazil, Bolivia, and the Argentine would all give enormous territorial concessions to such a company. In Paraguay, perhaps, not so much could be expected in the way of free land, for the simple reason that former Governments have unwisely parted with most of the public lands. From the tone of the local press, there is strong probability of the more honest and enlightened Government now in power doing much to mitigate the consequences of this folly



1 LOCAL ENTERPRISE :  
2 PABLO MEILLICKE'S LEATHER AND SADDLERY WAREHOUSE, ASUNCION.





and lack of foresight of former rulers. A short railway from the Upper Paraguay through the Bella Vista and Palomari districts to the upper course of the Parana, would open up an enormous area of magnificent agricultural and pastoral country, with a wealth of natural products in the way of timber and 'Yerba mate.' There is any amount of high healthy upland in this region. On the other side of the river an easily constructed line would give an outlet to the greater part of Bolivia. That country—hemmed in by enemies on the West Coast—would do almost anything to remove the vexatious restrictions which at present strangle her foreign commerce. Apart from the roundabout sea voyage and expensive railway freights from the West Coast, it is notorious that half the imported goods are looted in handling at these ports—empty cases being filled up with stones and other rubbish. After running the gauntlet of blackmail of transshipment, customs, and railway transit across the Andes, the losses of merchandise can be easily imagined. A railway from the Alto-Paraguay would obviate all of these difficulties and losses—as well as afford a cheap and easy outlet for the rubber districts and mining regions of the interior. Large areas of unoccupied country, with fine scenery and a splendid climate, would thus be opened up to the industrious colonist.

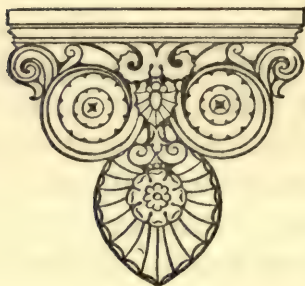
Owing to the splendid navigable waterways

available such a scheme need not involve very much outlay in the way of capital. The shipping line would step into a good revenue right away derived from existing traffic. Trade might be reasonably expected to increase rapidly, while the timber, rubber, and pastoral industries should produce good returns almost from the start. Many of the Brazilian cattle in Matto Grosso are good enough for the Buenos Ayres market, and cattle freights on the river-boats should really come out very light compared with the prices which they would realize down below. The idea can only be carried out on a large scale, by securing a special charter from the various Governments interested.

All of my readers will agree that the scheme is really quite splendid—if some other fellow would only carry it out. So if any one wishes to go down to posterity as the Cecil Rhodes of South America, he knows where to go, and his opportunity is still awaiting him. The men and money are all ready for the first pioneer who wades through the initial difficulties of primary organization. An Argentine syndicate is arranging to construct a new railway from Asuncion via Trinidad, Limpio, Emboscada, Altos, Atiriz, Barreiro Grande, San Jose, Ajos, and Caaguazu to the Parana, connecting at the far-famed Iguassu Falls with the projected Brazilian railway right through to

San Francisco on the Atlantic coast. This line will prove a boon to passengers to Europe, and, in time, will doubtless attract a very considerable influx of tourists. The same Company also intend completing the railway following the western bank of the Rio Paraguay—up to a point opposite the city of Asuncion. These projects may not be realized for some time, but it is quite evident that great developments of the central part of the South American continent are easily possible—if practical people will only take the matter in hand and initiate a sound system of colonization. A repetition of the land boom of the early nineties can do no good, as all the lands of the Chaco, and nearly all of Paraguay, is held by absentee owners, who do nothing to develop their properties. Fortunately, in Matto Grosso and Bolivia there is still unlimited scope. In climate and material resources, the southern half of the continent is far and away superior to the north. The extremes of heat and cold, so trying in the States and Canada, are most infrequent ; while, in the tropics, the rays of sunshine are tempered by sea breezes, elevation, and the proximity of large forests, scorching hot winds are almost unknown. As already stated, all social, political, and material disadvantages could be easily removed by the administration of a large chartered Company. The gain of these backward Republics would be incalculable ; and

European colonization upon a large scale might be expected to draw them closer together, and bridge over all existing differences. It is not so much a question of possibilities as of finding people sufficiently plucky and resolute to grasp the opportunity while it still awaits them.









## THE GUAYRA FALLS

---

The Guayra Falls is really the Niagara of the South—indeed, of greater depth and more than twice as wide as the great cataract of the basin of the St. Lawrence. Unfortunately, this marvel of nature on the Alto-Parana is not as yet readily accessible to tourists. To visit the Falls by land requires a long horseback journey through open prairies, and finally, long forest cuttings in the tangled woods which characterize this region. There is no population, except a few yerba gatherers for a few months in the year, and wild Indians, whom one never sees, hiding away in the darkness of the forests. Insect pests are troublesome, and 'roughing it' unavoidable. By river it is as yet almost equally inaccessible except from above. The completion of the Brazilian Atlantic Railway will render greater facilities for getting at this little-known region. As narrated elsewhere, the Jesuits had at one time large settlements on the upper waters of the Parana—above the Falls. Some day an enormous population will develop the hidden wealth of this region. Indeed, the Falls alone might provide sufficient electrical power for the whole Republic. What has been already done in North America will be done in the future in the South of the continent. If a fraction of the capital, enterprise, and labour which is expended in Alaska were only devoted to the opening up of the 'Sunny South' we should see things begin to move.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### HEALTH NOTES FOR HOT COUNTRIES

UNFORTUNATELY for the 'genus' biped, modern scientists have, until recently, been more interested in the formulating of sun-spot theories and the invention of infernal machines for the destruction of human beings than in the possibilities of dietetics, or the influence of climatology upon human health. Under such circumstances, it is the bounden duty of all who think they have acquired special knowledge to publish the fact for the benefit of their fellows. And in a case of this kind, any one is justified in believing his own opinion to be as correct as that of any one else with a like amount of experience. So, having arrived at a robust middle age, without any evident cessation of bodily vigour, after the best part of a quarter of a century passed mostly amidst the hardships of pioneering, exploration, hunting, and soldiering, in the tropics and sub-tropics, the writer has naturally collected a number of facts derived from first-hand



personal experience and observations relating to acclimatization of the Northern races in hot countries. Some day, in the distant future, the man who collates such experiences and draws the correct deductions therefrom, will be in a position to formulate an exact science where now we grope in the dark. The few original thinkers in every age who have placed the science of medicine in its present position have rarely strayed beyond the confines of the icy North. For this reason, many tropical diseases remain still to be classified. Those highly strung, artistic souls who would like to live upon distilled dew and the concentrated essence of flowers, will be quite horrified when I say that one of the first essentials in the preservation of normal health in these countries is mainly a question of wholesome food, exercise, and ventilation. This can best be illustrated by the fact that upon one occasion the writer conveyed an expedition, comprising sixty-one African natives and four Europeans, from the Zanzibar Coast, right into the Lake districts of Central Africa, and back again to the sea, without a single man suffering from so-called climatic diseases. There was not a mosquito net in the whole caravan, and we mostly slept in the open air. *But we lived upon simple cereal foods and meat fresh from the hunter's rifle.* A scientific explanation of this happy result would be that the beneficent action of one set of

bacteria counteracted the evil influence of another opposing legion of microscopic invaders. Quite possibly such may or may not be the correct explanation; but, in any case, I am open to conduct a similar party over the same ground, and, by feeding them largely on potted foods, and giving a liberal allowance of alcohol, will guarantee to produce malarious fever in the case of nine-tenths of the men in the short period of two months. This phase of the question has been plainly demonstrated in the history of Rhodesia. Every European—living mostly on tinned provisions—almost to a man, gets fever, as well as the native servants of these people, picking from their master's leavings. I have even seen the dogs and cats belonging to Europeans in that country develop the characteristic symptoms of malarious fever from the same cause. In any climate there is always a certain risk in the habitual use of concentrated foods, preserved by the canning process. A certain number of cases of 'ptomaine' poisoning always occur. And in a hot climate the liver and digestive organs are much more sensitive to annoyances of this kind. The moral is then—if one is not subject to suicidal tendencies—as far as possible, only to consume '*fresh*' food, prepared in the simplest manner possible—preferably a combination of cereals and animal food.

During my experience of Rhodesia, the Kaffirs

—other than those employed as kitchen domestics by the whites—living mostly on cereals, were quite free from fever. No doubt there is a great deal in the mosquito theory, but it really means that the matter injected during the bite of this pest may possibly take effect upon people already rendered susceptible to its malign influence by previous indiscretions and bad living. I have never seen an intelligent attempt to define the action of this poison—as to whether the microbe is supposed to be conveyed direct from the insect's feeding-ground to each individual affected, or if, on the other hand, the virus is transmitted from the sick to the healthy by the bite of the creature. Doubtless many other diseases are conveyed in this manner—by the mosquito, the sandfly, or midge, and other varieties of blood-sucking creatures. This fact has been known to the agricultural classes for thousands of years before the medical profession discovered the existence of blood poisons of this class. But in the case of this fever business, the writer—in company with many other experienced travellers—is quite certain that malaria is often transmitted by other influences; otherwise, how can it be that amongst a number of people living in the same house in a district infected by mosquitoes, one and the same person may be troubled with the disease off and on for years, while all the others go free, even when



sleeping in the same room? *Then the fever exists in many countries where there are no mosquitoes*, such as the Fen district in England and in the South of Spain.

A more striking example still is that cinder-heap known as the Peninsula of Aden. Not a single instance of any one of the conditions which have ever been advanced by the faculty to account for the prevalence of the disease can be found in that God-forsaken desert. Yet a certain proportion of cases always occur.

In the settlement of Northern Queensland in the early days the mining camps were rushed by a wild, harum-scarum lot of fellows, who drank hard, lived anyhow, on tinned provisions or indigestible 'damper' cooked in the ashes. The result was that, as these adventurers expressed it in language rather forcible than elegant, they died from fever and ague like rotten sheep. Well, in the process of time, these mines were established upon a permanent footing. Houses were built, and the miners' wives came along to cook decent food, and look after their husbands; also the Chinese gardener, who produced an abundance of fresh vegetables and fruit. Drunken 'sprees' became the exception rather than the rule of life, and behold! these mining-camps became—with altered conditions of living—perfectly healthy. To this day the forest reigns supreme in the neighbourhood—and the



mosquitoes are quite as numerous as of old in their old-time haunts.

The good effects obtained by Major Ross and others in draining and disinfecting pestiferous swamps—as at Ismailia and other places—is far from being conclusive evidence on this point. It is a well-known fact that in a hot country the functions of the liver are deranged by the inhalation of impure air arising from such spots. Also the tests of people being confined to mosquito-proof tents—and a like number being exposed to the attacks of mosquitoes and so getting fever—may or may not justify the inferences drawn from the experiment. In the first place, we are not certain of all of the facts. There is always a tendency to jump at conclusions ; also a temptation to exaggerate for the sake of getting good ‘ copy.’ In any case, malarious fever, being largely under the influence of the mental emotions, in the one case confidence in the precautions taken would to some extent act as a preventative, while in the other, ‘ funk ’ would be equally sufficient to render many people liable to contagion. On the other hand, an overwhelming array of facts range themselves quite plainly in favour of the writer’s theory ; the predisposing causes on the one hand—according to the text-books on the practice of medicine—all tending to disarrange the functions of the liver and spleen in any climate ; and on the

other, the preventive or curative treatment in every case acting as tonics and restorative agents for these same organs. These are, in the first place, bad or indiscreet living, the use of tinned provisions, alcoholic stimulants or fiery condiments, a sedentary life, dissipation, sleeplessness—caused by insufficient ventilation or annoyance from insect pests; and last, but not least, mental worry, grief, anger, or passion—the so-called malarial fever being under the influence of the emotions to an extent quite incredible to people who have not been through the experience. The preventive or restorative measures being the use of fresh, plain, wholesome foods, temperate living, plenty of exercise in the open air, early rising, cheerfulness, precautions to ensure undisturbed sleep at night, absence of worry, and the occasional use of suitable drugs as tonics and stimulants to the digestive process. I don't wish to cast reflections upon the medical fraternity. They have worked wonders; but if we are to believe the best authorities, the science of bacteriology is still in its infancy. Except in a few cases, it is impossible to define positively the action of any given set of microbes in the varied stages of health and disease. No one can yet say in what manner they react upon each other's influence, and the fact of finding one particular kind present in any given infirmity gives no indication as to whether that



A PUBLIC SQUARE, ASUNCION.





presence really means cause, effect, or coincidence. This knowledge will only be gained by generations of careful investigation. It being in any case a well-established fact that perfect health gives immunity from the contagion of many—if not all—the diseases to which human flesh is heir.

Annoyance from mosquitoes may be obviated by the use of a few drops of oil of lavender, sprinkled upon the hands and face and repeated every few hours as necessary. Sprayed lightly upon the window panes, this invaluable drug will keep away flies and all other noxious insects.

It is wonderful to see the manner in which the unconscious instinct of man has in different countries developed a correct idea of the most wholesome foods. In England, we find that bread-and-butter is regarded as the staple of the nation. If we go to the East, there again one finds the same happy combination of the starchy and carbonaceous elements. Every one uses clarified butter, with rice or some other cereal. In fact, it is only when the primal instincts have been perverted by unnatural living that we go wrong ; sometimes by the compulsion of circumstances, more often by the misuse of a little fancied knowledge. It is really very funny to read the scientific bill of fare provided for us by some of our armchair philosophers, methodically weighed and measured down to the last

decimal fraction of an ounce. Any one who has taken the trouble to observe, will quite agree with the statement when I say that under the influence of hard exercise and exposure to the elements, when the waste of force and tissue is very considerable, one requires at least four times the amount of food that would be sufficient to keep up the standard of normal health during a like period of sedentary life. Nature punctually knocks at the door when feeding-time comes along. And, if left alone, she is equally certain to tell us when we have already had sufficient, if we only masticate our food thoroughly without any mixture of other fluid before swallowing. I am convinced that most people do not eat half enough, at least in the way of solids. When Nature asks for something substantial to work upon, indispensably necessary for the production of vital force, they too often reply with a stimulant or narcotic, in the form of some rubbishy drink or equally pernicious cigar, thereby deranging the healthy working of the digestive organs.

In the way of fluids, Nature gave us two beverages, quite beyond the constructive genius of man. The one is known in our own language as 'milk,' the other 'water.' For the last three years I have had under observation the case of a boy of seven years of age who has the misfortune to be born of drunken parents. He has rum and cigars at his disposal, whenever

inclined to partake of them. As a consequence, the poor little beggar has not grown an inch during all that period. Alcohol is little better than poison in tropical countries ; and as a temporary pick-me-up or stimulant, it is simply not to be compared with a cup of pure black coffee.

Re the much debated question of vegetarian against animal foods, one can only say that the former is in most cases impracticable, as it is usually impossible to obtain the necessary combinations. In India, for example, amongst the poorer classes, who live mostly upon rice or other starchy foods, the people are undersized, lacking in vitality, with flabby, protruding stomachs, and small resisting powers to the ravages of disease. It is only when animal products, as eggs, milk, butter, or cheese, are combined with cereal foods that we see really good results. In fact, most of the strongest people in the world are brought up in this manner. In reply to the oft-repeated argument that our dentition indicates a vegetarian origin, it is only necessary to say that from the time when man disported himself among the branches—if he really amused himself in this manner in the Garden of Eden—thousands of generations have elapsed, during which period he has mostly subsisted upon a mixed diet, and it is doubtful if we could now depart from that rule without suffering from the consequences.



Certain facts, however, are obvious. Flesh foods, if used at all, should be 'fresh.' Secondly 'Orientals' living in a hot climate have forgotten more than we know when they declared the flesh of the domestic pig to be unclean. Pig's grease, particularly if burnt in the process of frying, will quickly set up the symptoms of liver derangement known commonly as malarial fever. A few years ago, the United States military authorities tried an experiment with scientifically prepared foods in tabloids. Theoretically, everything was correct. The waste material was eliminated, leaving only the exact combination of chemical constituents requisite for the maintenance of the human frame. A company of infantry camping out upon the Western plains were selected to test the matter. Strange to say, their human digestive organs, being constructed to deal effectively with so-called waste matters, promptly went on strike at such treatment, and every man became seriously ill in the course of the first few weeks. So much for trying to improve upon Nature.

In the way of work, it is a vulgar error to imagine that the white man cannot endure severe exercise in the open air. On the contrary, it is essential. In temperate climates, the cold gives tone to the system—even during a comparatively sedentary life. On the other hand, in a hot climate, the tendency is all



the other way—if one keeps indoors. That is, the heat and impure air enervates ; but a moderate amount of exercise in the sunshine braces one up and develops a hard, wiry condition, really much healthier than the best form one can work up to in cold countries. With this end in view, clothing should be merely adapted to protect the skin from the bite of insects. One set of garments only—to allow a free circulation of the air around the body ; light, loose, and open in texture. Anything more than this is harmful, particularly if underclothing—sopping with perspiration—is worn next the skin. This also is one of the predisposing causes leading to fever—owing to the consequent derangement of the circulation.

Cleanliness, of course, must be attended to. In such climates, being a pleasure, one should always bathe—taking care to avoid a sudden shock or chill—before resting, after any exercise involving free perspiration. Surface water—as being nearer the temperature of the body—is mostly pretty safe. A good plan is to take a few gallons, washing or sponging face, hands, arms, legs, sides, and chest in succession, so as to interfere as little as possible with the circulation of the blood. It being always remembered that cleanliness, without chill is the end in view—followed up by the exhilaration and increased vitality resulting from a good rubbing down with a rough towel.

Many folk also imagine that people are more energetic in cold rather than in hot countries. As a man of merely normal development, I am quite sure that this idea is erroneous. In cold weather I work or play only by the compulsion of will power. On the contrary, in hot weather, ideas come freely, and I have rather an excess of energy for either work or play. In the one case there is a tendency to hibernate ; in the other a free, spontaneous flow of mental spirits and physical well-being. Moreover, all history bears out this theory. It is always easier to elaborate rather than to originate. Well, without a single exception, all the indigenous civilizations of the world have originated in hot countries. It is not easy to say positively which were entirely indigenous. But historians mostly agree that the civilizations of Ancient Egypt, the Euphrates Valley and Saba, Ceylon, and Central America were of this class. These people, starting with nothing beyond their brains—and naked bodies—built up a state of material and social well-being in some respects in advance of any modern nation of the twentieth century. By way of contrast, the inhabitants of cold countries in every case remained as barbarous painted savages—until civilized by conquest, missions, intermarriage, or commercial intercourse with the inhabitants of more favoured climates. They adapted themselves

to the civilizations which were brought to them, and, having a solid base to start upon, to some extent improved upon the original. But compared with the work of their predecessors, who had absolutely nothing to go upon, their intellectual achievements have been insignificant. And it is the writer's belief that even that progress is due to the more than tropical heat of the summer in so-called temperate climes, giving new impulse to minds and bodies which have been partially paralysed by the gloom and cold of northern winters.

Some people have a mortal terror of tropical sunshine. In reality the sun is always the giver of life rather than death. Normal animal and vegetable life thrives best in the sunlight, and degenerates rapidly in proportion as they are removed from the light. The skin of our hands and faces, for example, always exposed to the elements, is very much healthier than that of the body—which is wrapped up in useless clothing. So in a hot climate, after gradual acclimatization, one may work or play in the fiercest sunshine with advantage rather than detriment to one's health, a fact which has been demonstrated by the experience of thousands of the white race in the Gulf country, Northern Queensland—the hottest place on earth.

It sometimes happens that from short nights, heat, disturbance from insects, or other causes, one may not have had sufficient sleep. In that case, a



mid-day siesta is desirable; preferably working, say, till ten o'clock in the morning, and, if tired out, taking one's rest—without food—until one or two o'clock in the afternoon. The mid-day meal may then be taken, as the equivalent of an ordinary breakfast. And once again, one feels fit for anything as in the morning. However, if the night's sleep has been sufficient, the siesta will be harmful rather than beneficial. The more sluggish one's habits become, the more readily one succumbs to so-called climatic diseases. Dr. Abernethy's celebrated prescription, 'Live upon a shilling a day, and earn it,' would act as a sovereign preventive for most of the infirmities to which flesh is heir in hot countries.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt that the ova of the *Uncinaria* parasite—referred to in Chapter XXIX—is conveyed to human beings incidentally by small flies feeding upon decomposed excrement lying exposed in open places to the unprotected food-stuffs in people's kitchens or dwelling-houses. The obvious preventive measures for this and many other diseases, to be rigorously enforced by every civilized government, are: (1) The expulsion of the worm from all persons affected, by the use of suitable drugs; (2) The compulsory use of fly-proof closets; (3) The preservation of all foods in wire-woven safes, secure against the smallest of insect marauders. The adoption of these measures would eliminate 50 per cent. of the so-called climatic disease from the Tropics and the warmer portions of the Temperate Zones.







## A RIACHO IN THE CHACO

---

The Gran Chaco, or Great Wilderness, is even yet to a great extent a blank upon the map of South America. Here and there, along the banks of the great river, a few sugar plantations, sandalwood extract mills, and cattle-ranches have been established, but in the interior there are no inhabitants excepting a few tribes of semi-nomadic Indians. In the north, Mr. Barbroke Grubb, of the South American Missionary Society, settled amongst these people twenty-two years ago, and after an adventurous career, by the exercise of tact and common sense, acquired a very considerable influence over the Lenguas—one of the largest tribes in that part of the Chaco. But in the early days, this pioneer of mission work had a decidedly rough time of it, on one occasion only escaping death by a miracle from the effects of an arrow-wound in the chest. That tragic incident seemed to mark a turning-point in the influence of the white race, and since that period the Indians have proved themselves amenable to the possibilities of civilization, if the frequent extremes of drought or flood only rendered an agricultural life anything like a certainty as the reward of their labour. There is a possible future in pastoral pursuits—and perhaps in growing dates, as the palm flourishes amazingly almost all over the country. Also by turning the periodical inundations to advantage for the irrigation of the flooded grounds by a proper control of the river waters.

## CHAPTER XXV

### A NEW PLANTATION INDUSTRY

ALTHOUGH 'yerba mate' has been introduced with some degree of success as a table beverage in Europe and North America, owing to the recommendations of the medical fraternity, and the consumption of the drink has increased amongst the poorer classes in South America, yet in great cities like Buenos Ayres, the ultra fashionable, in their desire to be up-to-date in all things—consider it the correct thing to have their tea and coffee 'A los Ingleses,' at all events, in society, even if there is a bit of back-sliding in the early morning in the seclusion of their own kitchens when a 'mate' is regarded as an indispensable 'pick-me-up' after the dissipations of the previous night. There is no doubt the drug is often abused, being frequently used to cheat the heart and stomach—when substantial food is necessary to restore the normal state of the blood. Still, when it comes to a choice of artificial beverages, we must unhesitatingly



pronounce in favour of infused 'mate'—without sugar—as compared with the known deleterious effects of tea, coffee, or cocoa. Yerba mate (*Ilex Paraguayensis*) is indigenous to Paraguay, the Argentine Misiones, and South Central Brazil. The original Spanish conquerors found that the Indians made use of a strong infusion of the dried leaves as a substitute for food to sustain their energies for long periods while under the influence of extreme fatigue during long journeys. It is still used for the same purpose by all South Americans, and also by most of the Europeans whose lot is cast in the Southern half of the continent. This abuse of nature, of course, if persisted in, inevitably results in chronic derangement of the circulative and digestive organs, finally ending in permanent affections of the heart. It is easily comprehensible that the habit is especially injurious to growing children—who require 'solid food' to supply the constituents needed for the formation of their growing bodies. However, when used in moderation, and occasionally discontinued for a time, the effects are quite different. 'Mate' is an excellent stomach tonic, and often gives relief in cases of dyspepsia. A weak infusion taken cold without sugar is a refreshing beverage—having none of the objectionable consequences resulting from the taking of large draughts of cold water. Therapeutically considered, 'mate'

increases the action of the heart and respiratory movements while promoting the more rapid action of the digestive organs. It is also a stimulant to the nervous system, those who have been accustomed to the excessive use of the 'mate bombilla' suffering physically and mentally when deprived of their customary beverage.

Paraguay exports annually yerba to the value of a million dollars gold. Practically all of it is the spontaneous product of the primaeval forests. Many of the old 'Yerbales' have been destroyed by continued and persistent cutting down of the original plants by the 'yerbatero' peons, who are paid by weight of leaf, which they naturally gather in the easiest manner possible, generally mixing in a large proportion of other leaves of like appearance to give bulk and weight to their packs of 'Yerba.' Under the circumstances, it is obvious that there is an opening for the artificial plantation of this useful plant. A beginning has already been made in the Argentine Misiones and Paraguay. It is estimated that the German settlers in Colonia Hohenau, on the Parana, about five leagues above Villa Encarnacion, have already half a million plants out. In this colony, the population mostly consists of Brazilian-born Germans, who are accustomed to the primitive methods of clearing and cultivating forest lands usually in vogue



URRUTIA, UGARTE AND CO.,  
IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION.





in South America. In San Pedro on the Alto-Paraguay, some people have already obtained good results from this industry. If the process of picking the leaves and drying by artificial heat is practised—as for tea—returns will begin to come in after the fourth year, according to cultivation and treatment, the yield increasing annually for another fifty years.

There are two varieties of the *Ilex Paraguayensis* : the one a shrub, which may be planted out at distances of three yards apart ; the other quite a large tree, which requires a space of ten yards in diameter for full development. It is only recently that the secret of making the seed germinate promptly has been discovered. The hot-water process to soften the shell appears to be the most satisfactory, although results are obtained by soaking in a solution of potash or immersion for a few days in running water. As the young plant is extremely delicate and sensitive to exposure to the direct rays of the tropical sunshine, the most convenient method, in the absence of hollow bamboos, is to plant in tiny wooden boxes about nine inches deep—without a bottom—so that in the process of transplanting it is only needful to split off the outer case so as to leave the roots of the young shrub a chance to spread out naturally without having the earth disturbed around the tender and delicate plant in transition from the seed-bed to its final

location in the plantation. During the early stages the seed-bed must be kept constantly damp—and protected from the direct rays of the sun, the young plants being eventually hardened off by gradual exposure to heat and sunshine.

Expenses may be paid for the first few years by the cultivation of catch crops, such as maize, mandioca, tobacco, &c., taking care to leave a sufficient space for the circulation of air around each plant. The clearing of forest land costs by ordinary methods about twenty-five dollars gold per hectarea. If the planter knows his business, he will spend a little more, and have all the trees cut close to the ground—so as to permit of the use of disc implements of cultivation from the start. Marketable timber may be removed, and the balance hauled out for future use as firewood, or for the production of charcoal. A still better method—which comes out a hundred per cent. cheaper in the long run—is to remove a little earth on one side of each tree, cut away a few of the roots thus exposed, and leave the rest to Nature. The first wind-storm will blow the whole forest thus treated down on a face, tearing out the remaining roots so effectually as to leave only the ordinary axe-work of clearing a plantation. By either of the methods thus described no firing is required, therefore no destruction of the rich humus necessary for the best development of

plant life. The intelligent settler harnesses the forces of nature to do as much work as possible. The old-time methods of digging stumps out by hand, or even removing them with machinery, is ridiculous. It requires sheer brute force to lift out a stump. With the standing tree—on the contrary—gravitation may be made to do most of the work. The children of woodcraft and the true knights of the axe are only found in two countries, North America and the Antipodes.

There is a spice of romance in yerba gathering in South American woods. Flint-age Indians still roam some of these solitudes, always very timid and seldom hostile. Still, the yerbatero—probably in response to the silence and gloom of the woods—is always on the qui vive at the slightest noise. Every now and then a man-eating jaguar takes toll of human flesh—until he is hunted down with a pack of dogs and dispatched, mostly taking the spirits of a few of his canine adversaries with him to the happy hunting-ground of the far beyond. Accidents often occur from the use of faulty or defective firearms.

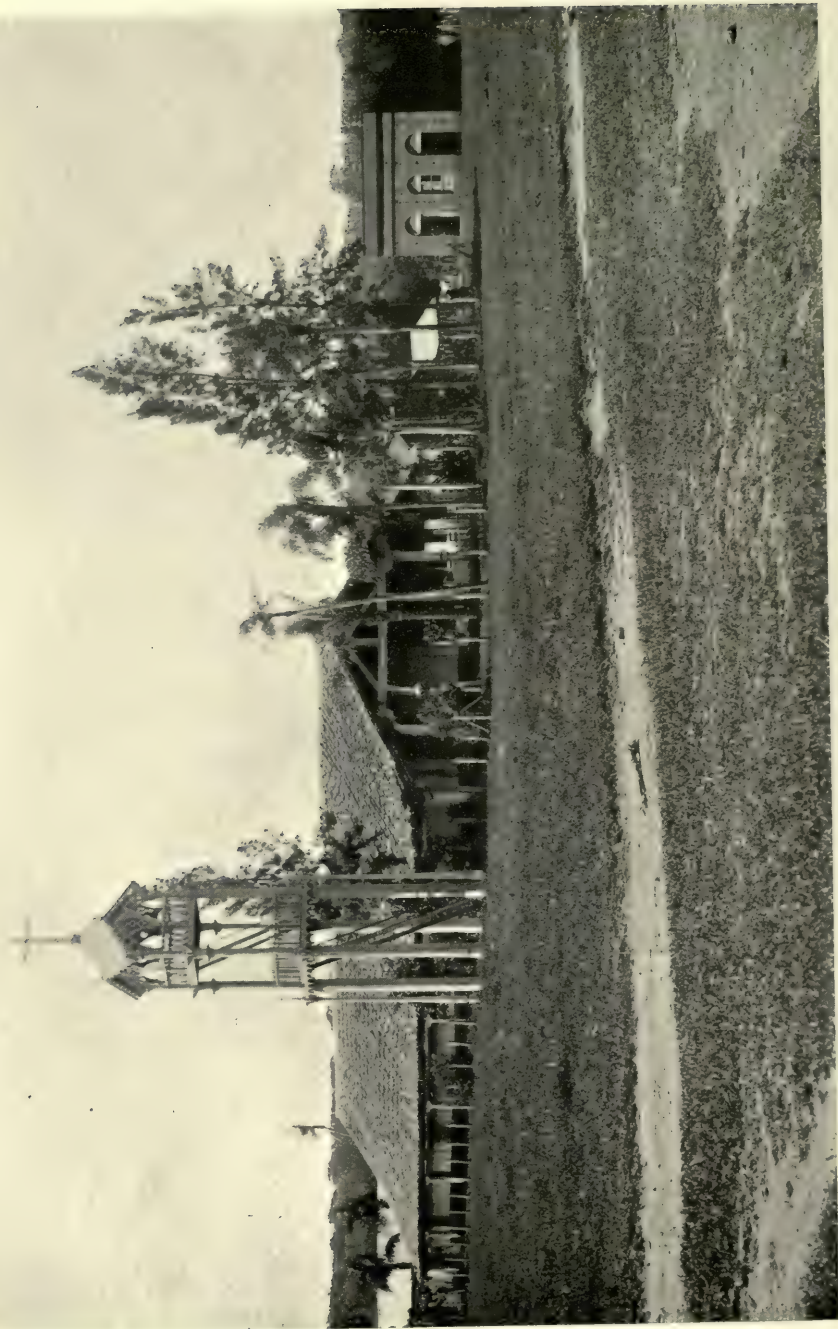
The Yerba of commerce is often carted or more frequently conveyed in barges for hundreds of miles down the swirling waters of little known rivers, before reaching the point of rail communication or ports of call on the main rivers. A good deal of the business

is done by large companies. The 'Industrial Paraguay,' for example, own over a thousand square leagues of territory, about half of that area—Yerba-producing forest. The property, with the live stock on their estancias, is easily worth a million pounds to-day, while the company secured most of their land for next to nothing. If the association had any ambition, they might found a nation on their magnificent property, in the centre and north-east of the Republic.









## OLD JESUIT CHURCH, CANGO

---

An old Spanish author stated, after seeing one Jesuit village, one had seen the lot—that each bore the like similarity to the other, as one drop of water to another drop of water. A fact to be noted by those extreme Socialists or Communists who would merge the individuality of the unit in the slavery of the social commonwealth, sacrificing the inventive and artistic ideas of the many to the stereotyped tyranny of the State. Progress in the individual or community can only come with responsibility. In Paraguay the church forms one side of a central square. The women folk are reverent worshippers of the Unseen God, and regularly attend service draped in long black shawls and immaculate, well-starched skirts, which crinkle as the fair owners glide in silently and gracefully to their seats. The men appear to be fancy free in these matters, and are rarely seen at a place of worship. A contrast to Eastern countries, where men only attend the mosques, and the weaker sex are supposed to have no part in the Hereafter, unless, perhaps, in a transfigured form of beauty to contribute to the sensual pleasures of their lords and masters in the by-and-by. There is a perfect religious liberty for belief and unbelief, and the jolly old Padre is not above hob-nobbing with a foreign heretic. His efforts in the way of the spiritual guidance of his flock appear to act as a physical tonic, and, as elsewhere, his plump, well-filled form indicates the effect of good living and contentment. That material prosperity is carried into the things of this world, where he has mostly a few houses, and an estancia for his live stock out on the prairies.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### A ROMANCE OF JESUIT MISSION WORK : AN EXPERIMENT IN STATE SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM

THE story of the Jesuits in South America has yet to be written. The writer makes no attempt to treat the subject exhaustively in the few pages which he is able to devote to the subject. But having lived for fifteen years in the country, with consequent opportunities of comparing local records and tradition with the published history of the disciples of Loyola, he has enjoyed special opportunities of sifting masses of evidence relating to the varying progress of European civilization in this part of the continent. As far as documentary evidence goes, the collection now preserved in the 'Biblioteca Nacional' in Asuncion is by far the most valuable. The average reader would not care to wade through the dry history of the movement, and no attempt is made to get beyond the most interesting and instructive incidents in the life and works of the early fathers. The opinions of



commentators differ widely. Some contend that the Jesuits succeeded in establishing an ideal state of society amongst their Indian proselytes. Many people might still take that point of view. It depends upon their ideals of social development. One thing is certain in any case. If it were only possible for some of our extremist reformers to have the privilege of living for a few years in a Jesuit settlement, we may be sure their views upon many doubtful points would be cleared up to their entire satisfaction, although, perhaps, not in the way they anticipated.

Close upon three hundred and fifty years have now elapsed since the early pioneers of the movement first set foot in Paraguay. Spanish colonization had already obtained a firm footing amongst the Guaranis. In order to explain what afterwards occurred, it is necessary to state that at that period of their history the Indians were having a particularly bad time. In the North, the Brazilians made periodical raids for the purposes of securing slave-labour for the mines and plantations in Minas Geraes and San Paulo. The primitive men of the woods were timid, simple, and unsophisticated in the extreme. Even had they been of a warlike disposition, the bow-and-arrow were poor weapons in comparison with the firearms of the slave-hunters. Moreover, the latter took advantage of tribal

animosities in order to cut them up in detail at their own convenience.

Some authorities say that three hundred thousand of these people were carried off into slavery in this manner. This statement may be exaggerated, but there is little doubt that large numbers of these innocents were captured by the sword and sold into life-long servitude without hope of return to their country. In the South, the Spanish conquerors were not very much better. It is true that they permitted some communities to settle peacefully near their own villages for a consideration. The Indians had to pay for this privilege by working without wages for their masters during two months in the year, and also to assist in capturing their less fortunate brethren in the woods.

Man-hunting was considered good sport in those days, and a small army of men and dogs turned out whenever they felt that way inclined, to hunt down the wild Indians in the neighbouring forests. There was no escape from the blood-hounds employed for the purpose ; in vain they tried to keep them off by brandishing long clubs and jumping from side to side. There was no refuge except in the trees ; and once their quarry was treed amongst the branches the hounds yelped and barked until the hunters came along and secured the helpless fugitives with thongs

of green hide, until they became amenable to discipline.

A few descendants of these Indians still hide away in the forest fastnesses of remote parts of Paraguay, and, shame to say, are sometimes treated in the same way, in defiance of the laws passed for their protection ; except that, instead of being captured, they are now shot for sport or vindictiveness by wild backwoodsmen, slavery not being permitted in modern days. In the Spanish settlement their chance of escape was small indeed, partly because their own countrymen in all the free communities outside were all in league against them. In this manner, owing to the rapacity of Spanish and Portuguese alike, the necessity of the Indians became the Jesuit's opportunity.

Two distinct methods were employed to get converts, illustrating the varied character of the first missionaries. There were certainly some very fine men amongst the early Fathers, heroes who fearlessly took their lives in their hands, without a thought for the welfare of the physical man or the material things of this life on earth.

The rigorous abnegation of their daily routine was quite beyond the suspicion of ulterior motives, sleeping in wretched mud huts and eating the coarsest food, when they were lucky enough to obtain enough to keep body and soul together.

These men never lost sight of the loftiest Christian ideals ; their meagre pittance was shared freely with the poorest Indian who happened to come along, and often during the long years spent in wandering over the country in search of converts, hungry and footsore, they literally starved rather than ask for food unless it was freely offered. This way of doing things was certainly admirable, although perhaps equally good results could have been obtained in other ways.

In the way of contrast, some disciples of the order really ' caught ' their men with guile in accordance with the old apostolical injunction. Tame Indians, well trained in the art, were sent out with presents of food and cattle to the wild men of the wood—much after the same method used in snaring parrots. Time after time the process was repeated, until a degree of confidence was established, and a few of the old proselytes being smuggled in with each successive convoy of provisions to talk over their more simple kinsfolk. Feasting, music, and dancing were the order of the day, until it became clear to the savages that life in the missions was certainly preferable to mosquito-dodging on short commons in the trackless forests of their native land. Like some modern slaves of the twentieth century, certain luxuries had become a necessity in their daily lives ; moreover, they were



naturally fond of music and gaiety—verily unsophisticated children of Adam and Eve.

The Fathers at this stage were always affable and charming in their manners to their naked brothers. Finally the net was drawn in, and escape became impossible, even if the newly-made proselytes desired it, because of the superior force of arms of the trained mission servants; so that in this manner the lazy man of the woods was eventually compelled to settle down to steady and monotonous work in the fields. The tame decoys were always well rewarded with the material things of this world for their services, as also with the promise of good things in the hereafter.

Perhaps the end was supposed to justify the means. In this age it is difficult to estimate the degree of sincerity of some of these men, or to know really how they were mentally constituted. As a matter of fact, there is no doubt that the Indians were better off on the missions than as serfs or slaves to the Spanish or Portuguese colonists of that period. Some of the old towns remain to this day, more or less as the Jesuits left them at the time of their expulsion. A central square, with a huge church conspicuous at one end and a nice lawn in the centre as a playground for the children, was the invariable plan of all the old reductions. In those days a deep ditch and a strong stockade equally prevented intrusion from without or

escape from within, except by the special permission of the Padre.

Day and night well-armed sentinels kept watch upon the walls as a precautionary measure against the possibilities of a raid, and in cases where there happened to be a river frontage, canoes patrolled the channel so as to give timely notice in the event of unwelcome visitors dropping down upon them unawares. The able-bodied men were kept constantly drilled and well armed to defend the settlements if required for that purpose, perhaps even with some far-off idea of founding a Jesuit empire. Who can say? Possibly from motives of commercialism or ambition.

At this stage, the order chose other instruments to carry out their latest ideas of progress. The humble, self-sacrificing religious enthusiast was no longer needed, and his place was taken by men of administrative capacity and keen business instincts. The man of prayer gave place to the hard-headed and often cruel despot, who needed temporal power to further the interests of the Society, and I am sadly afraid, very often with an eye to his own personal aggrandisement, all at the expense of the poor simple Indians on their reservations. The Padres lived in state, like princes in mediaeval Europe, surrounded by every luxury that money could buy and all that the forced labour of their dependents could secure for their master's

comfort. The itinerant friar gave place to a pompous tyrant, who never condescended to move a step from the settlement except upon a gaily caparisoned palfrey.

Few men can resist the degenerating influences of unlimited power. Large sums of money were annually remitted to Europe to fill the treasury of the Society, who in such a case were not disposed to inquire too strictly as to how such revenue was obtained. Considerable quantities of 'Yerba mate,' hides, cotton goods, and other manufactured articles, were exported to Buenos Ayres and Peru. The mission churches were decorated with silver and gold, statuary and paintings equal to the best of those in Madrid or Rome. Celebrated masters in the arts and sciences were brought over from Europe to teach their crafts to such Indians as were needed for skilled workshops. Firearms, cutlery, and even cannons were turned out for their own use and even for sale to the government of the colony. In the course of time the missions became so strong as to practically rule the whole country. The governors sent out by the Crown found it a matter of policy to stand well with the Jesuit authorities, who always had it in their power to be generous friends or implacable enemies. Under these circumstances the Indian converts now found to their cost that they had escaped one form of slavery only to pass their lives under the most rigorous surveillance

of their spiritual advisers. Read, mark, learn, and spiritually digest, you people who would like to improve the human race out of existence under the rule of a Socialistic Commonwealth.

There was no evading the watchful eye of the clerical authorities, from the cradle to the grave. Although schools were attached to every mission as part of the establishment, yet only those instruments requiring training for special purposes were received in these institutions, and the scope of their education was strictly confined to those branches of knowledge specially required for the end in view. The three R.'s were not considered an essential accomplishment for the man with a hoe. Intercourse with strangers was strictly prohibited, as also the acquirement of the Spanish language. Early marriage was compulsory, as being considered essential to public morality and more rapid increase of population. The more bodies on earth, the more souls for the heavenly harvest—quite an ideal state of affairs ; so at the age of seventeen the boys, with the girls at fifteen—or even earlier—the young people were called up at the Sunday service and asked if they had any views as to their future partners in life. Seemingly, not being of a romantic disposition at that age, in most cases they had not yet fixed upon their affinities ; so, to save time and trouble, the Padre simply mated the young couples according





A BACKWATER ON THE RIO PARAGUAY



to his fancy, and married them out of hand, much after the fashion of a careful farmer looking after his breeding stock. Sometimes conjugal infidelity ensued, resulting in runaway couples escaping to the forests as a preliminary to joining another mission as man and wife. The old Adam and Eve was evidently sometimes too strong even for the Jesuit fathers. A prison, then, as now, was considered an indispensable adjunct to a village settlement, punishments were often delightfully primitive, occasionally horribly cruel. For murder, hard labour and imprisonment for life—man was too valuable an animal to be destroyed lightly without a commercial return. All other offences, such as insubordination, theft, flighty conduct of women-folk, or eloping with one's sweetheart, were offences promptly paid for with the lash, if detected; the scourge being sometimes laid on with such severity as to cut into the flesh at every blow. It is even said that, in matters of human frailty, most of the fathers were themselves no better than they might have been. The people were packed off to bed regularly at the stroke of the bell, and woe betide any luckless wight who was discovered outside of his house after hours by the village watchman! An hour before daylight the morning bell called every one to public prayer in the church. There was no turning over to the other side for an extra nap on a cold morning in

those days. Thence all the able-bodied men and women were marched off to work in the fields, singing hymns to the accompaniment of the drum and pipe, which led the procession out to the scene of their labours. The curate had no time for spiritual matters, being fully occupied in supervising field work and storing agricultural produce.

In order to get results, the sexes were kept apart while at work. There was no time for flirting—if the crops were to be kept free of weeds. Much experience gave the Jesuits a shrewd knowledge of human nature—that is, of its abnormal developments in a state of restraint. Even at church men and women each kept to their own respective side of the building. Society has been trying to do the same thing, with but a small degree of success, ever since Eve stole the apple. Some day people will learn and profit by experience. The sick people were attended by the Padre in the common hospital. The aged, cripples, infirm, and orphans, were always cared for in buildings apart from their fellows; but even these unfortunates were not permitted to eat the bread of idleness. The Jesuits did not believe in old-age pensions; perhaps they were partly right. A 'voluntary' occupation, if suitable, contributes to the health and happiness of old and young alike. However, it is doubtful if the Jesuits were sufficiently advanced to take this view



of matters. Weaklings each had his or her allotted task to perform, within the limits of their capacity, such as weaving, basket-making, or other easy indoor work. The fields were divided into three sections. For the first three days of the week, all were compelled to labour in the portion devoted to the revenues of the Society. Then a second part was subdivided into small lots for the maintenance of families, the remainder being worked in the interests of the church. Irresponsible power and the greed for wealth soon led to injustice and brutality, at times as horrible as that of the slave hunters. Batches of Indians were sent periodically out to the woods to collect 'yerba,' without food or resources of any kind. Every year scores of these helpless people were devoured by jaguars, or fell victims to the arrows of hostile tribesmen; ticks and other insects worried them to death, and the combined influences of hunger and the other hardships of the life invariably caused numerous victims amongst these miserable 'yerbateros,' who were unable to take the necessary precautions in order to enable them to live in health and comfort.

Once the leaves had been collected and dried, each man carried homewards a pack weighing from one hundred and twenty pounds to a hundred and fifty. It was noted frequently that on delivering his charge to the storekeeper, the burden weighed more than

the man who carried it. Short weight of this kind did not matter. Eventually some of these abuses caused so much scandal, that a succession of efforts were made by some of the best men of the period to prevent a repetition of these evils. Unfortunately, the whole system was wrong. The Indians at best were treated as mere domestic animals, whose brute strength was to be devoted to the primary object of obtaining wealth for the society in Europe; possessing souls indeed, which might become pure and free in another life but that here on earth could have neither scope, individuality, nor freedom. They worked, played, ate, and slept to beat of the drums. Considering their matrimonial arrangements, one might almost say that the poor Indian was even ushered into this world at the beck and call of the omnipotent Padre. The youthful Indian was taught to do as he was told, without presuming to ask the reason why; and if such an unnatural phenomenon as to be unreasonably inquisitive, the birch was promptly forthcoming to check his disrespectful curiosity. Reason was never appealed to for a solution of the mysteries of life. And his simple imagination could not resist the exhibition of external pomp and show, the imagery, rituals, processions, and music. Still, in strict justice, it must be remembered that the Jesuits stood between the rapacity of the fierce adventurers of those days

and the poor helpless savages, which they considered their lawful prey. The more humane example of the early fathers, as also the splendid commercial results obtained in the missions, produced a good effect amongst the early colonists. Then again, the religious ideas of the age were, to say the least, somewhat primitive; the whole object of life being to save the immortal soul, without attaching any importance to the mere material aspects of life in this world.

With the Guarani, the process was delightfully simple; a sprinkling with holy water and the benediction of the Padre was regarded as a safe and sure prospect to the heavenly land. He was to be kept within the fold by physical force if necessary, and in any case, what did it matter in all eternity if the proselytes' three-score years and ten were passed in unremitting toil and physical hardship? absolution and a final resting-place in holy ground made everything secure for endless happiness in the great by-and-by. The converts lived and died happy in this simple faith of future compensation for present ills. To the present day, when a child dies from any cause there is great rejoicing that the dear little one has become an 'angelito' (a little angel), and is specially fortunate in having so early entered upon the joys of Paradise. The little body is laid out in state in a room decorated with flowers and images of saints, while all the country-side



comes along to watch by the bier and enjoy the festival. Anything more pathetic it is difficult to imagine. The glare of lights and the chatter of these irresponsible people in the presence of death—could anything be more horrid?

In the course of time the collective population of the missions amounted to a hundred thousand souls, the wealth of the society being immense. At the time of expulsion in the year 1767, it is estimated that their possessions amounted to something like 100,000 horses and mules, 250,000 sheep, with close upon a million head of cattle. Huge plantations of orange-trees surrounded every township, and a beginning had been made with the artificial cultivation of 'Yerba mate.'

The causes which led to their final downfall were various. In the first place, there was extreme jealousy of the other ecclesiastical authorities. Second, the commerce of the company was so extensive and well managed as to make successful competition by the private colonist an impossibility. It was virtually a huge trust based upon forced labour. As such, by one means or another, they were able to set the common laws of the country at defiance. The civil authorities were either made subservient or completely ignored, while the Jesuit militia in those days constituted far and away the most formidable military force in the



River Plate. Being free from all the vexatious taxes upon the production and transit of goods, the export trade of the Society by far exceeded the commerce of all the rest of the country put together. Moreover, their retail establishments all over the country were fitted up regardless of cost, and sold to the public, both country produce and imported goods, at prices which gave them quite a monopoly of the shopkeeping business, to the great disgust of private traders. Matters had indeed reached a stage when either one form of government or the other must go. It was inevitable that such two extremes of social order could not exist together; the one had to merge into the other as a matter of compulsion. Continual protests against this state of affairs were sent in to the central government in Spain, until finally the fears of the Crown were worked upon to such an extent that timely expulsion was considered necessary to check the growing powers of the society once for all. Deprived of its leaders, the whole fabric of one-man government fell to pieces. One venerable priest, who had reached the advanced age of ninety years, only remained behind of all his order, for the simple reason that the poor old fellow was bedridden and consequently could not be moved. In this manner, Padre Asperga managed to defy the Spanish Crown, and left his old bones to their final resting-place in the town of Apostoles,

where he had worked for the best part of his life. It was feared for a time that the decree might have been resisted by physical force. And viewed in the light of subsequent events, in spite of all the shortcomings of the later Jesuits, one can't help regretting that the experiment had not been allowed further scope for the possibility of the development of the idea on broader lines. This would have been most interesting, although quite hopeless while under the control of either extremes of the Jesuit type, the fanatical religious enthusiast, or the selfish, egoistic, sensualist of the latter days of the order.

Most of the old towns are now a mass of ruins, all grown over with tropical forest; a few of the churches and other public buildings, being built of stone, only having resisted the disintegrating element which destroyed the more temporary houses of the common people. Here and there one finds the descendants of former converts, in actual occupation of the former settlements. Such places give one the blues. The people are listless, apathetic, and melancholy, and for about four hours in the middle of the day, during the hour of siesta, every house is shut, reminding one of a city of the dead. The arts and professions taught to a few by the Jesuits have mostly been long forgotten with the existence of the teachers. Only on feast days one sees a revival of the old customs,

when tinsel saints are carried around in procession headed by the parish priest and his subordinates. In the observation of these absurd frivolities, the religion of most of the modern Paraguayans begins and ends.

Strange to say, in the latter part of the nineties it would surely seem that a typical Jesuit had been re-incarnated in the person of an Englishman, who attempted to reconstruct a similar form of society, minus the religious element, with several hundred Anglo-Saxon colonists. Needless to say, the sons of Albion proved less amenable to discipline than the unsophisticated Guarani. The story of the venture is now pretty well known. The reduction system was continued for considerably more than half a century after the expulsion of the Jesuits, under the guidance of officers appointed by the government. These officials were more unmerciful even than their predecessors, and fleeced the poor Guaranis according to their almost unlimited opportunities, each seeking the means of bettering his own private fortune, regardless of the future prosperity of the people who were under his control. The parish priest developed into a gross sensualist, to such an extent as to become a by-word even to the easy-going Indians. In this way the Dictator Francia found the materials all ready to his hand to enable him to carry out his ideas of despotic



government. Centralizing the administration in his own person, he applied a modified form of the Jesuit system to the whole country with a surprising degree of success from the commercial and industrial point of view. In fact, in spite of all our high-flown ideas, which are right in theory, a really wise and beneficent despotism, if we could get it, is really the best form of government until the bulk of humanity reach a higher degree of intellectual development than we find in any country at present. At all events, the parliamentary system, consisting of two houses with five or six hundred members in each, is quite unwieldy and absurd. If that number were reduced to one-tenth or even one-twentieth, business might be possible, and there would be a chance of the best men carrying out their ideas without obstructions. The magnificent success of our own government in India, by means of highly trained officials, is an example demonstrating the necessity for a science of government independent of the transient and fickle opinions of party politicians or the equally objectionable mandates of an ignorant mob. Few countries have experienced such vicissitudes of fortune as Paraguay. The Jesuits found simple savages, and transformed them into workers. The successive governments of Francia and Lopez exploited the country much on the same principles, the people remaining in a state of serfdom. Lastly, the war of



the Triple Alliance decimated the population, but left the remnant free. Up to the present the only use they appear to make of that freedom is a kind of anarchistic desire to be left alone. As to how and when they will wake up to their responsibilities remains to be seen.



## PARAGUAYAN ARTILLERY

---

The Paraguayan Army, if such a microscopic force can be described as such, is composed of conscripts for the National Guard, who are compelled to serve two years before the colours. During the last few years they have smartened up very considerably, and there is no doubt but that the system is beneficial in the initiating of habits of personal cleanliness, system and order; as also in the way of instilling into primitive minds a respect for law and order. Otherwise, it is a tragedy, misfortune, and farce for a little country like Paraguay—wedged in between two powerful nations—to waste her treasure and strength in the effort to keep up her national dignity, when the labour of all her sons and millions more—if she had them—is required for the development of the dormant resources of a vast wilderness at their very doors. There are many other little and big nations on the face of the earth, to whom the same truth applies with equal force. In the bad old days the Paraguayan troops had a reputation for reckless bravery. It is certain that in the great war of the Triple Alliance they fought against big odds almost to the last man. The present race are somewhat mixed with Argentines and Brazilians and conditions are different. However, there is no likelihood of their being compelled to test their metal against a foreign foe. Even in South America, there is a strong sentiment in favour of arbitration. And nowadays, when there is so much foreign capital invested in railways and other enterprises, it pays very much better to keep the peace than dislocate the very foundations of society by fighting like savages without any intelligible object.







## CHAPTER XXVII

### A SOUTH AMERICAN REVOLUTION

No book on South America would be complete without the story of a revolution. In fact, the very name of the sub-continent is suggestive of the cutting of throats and shooting of would-be Presidents. We, of actual experience, never turn a hair when rumours of revolutions are afloat, and know that if the foreigner minds his own business he will not be interfered with. Indeed some of us are degenerate enough to think that if a cause is worth working for, it is equally worth fighting for—*if there is no alternative*. Say, for example, that by the application of material force, and even the loss of a few lives, we can bring about reforms in a few days for the saving of millions from annihilation, and misery, which, by the slower process of moral suasion, might take centuries, then we say, fight for the right. In South American countries, very often there is indeed no alternative. Nominally Republics, they are in actuality each and all oligarchies. No other form of

government is so far possible. The consequence is that if a gang of robbers get into power, a contingency not unknown even in European countries, the only remedy is to turn them out—by physical force if necessary. Of course, it is unfortunate that good men often get removed from office by the same process. It is pleasing to say that non-combatants are rarely molested in any way. However, education is advancing, and higher ideals are being realized, somewhat dimly perhaps, and the necessity for drastic measures of this kind is becoming very infrequent in the River Plate Republics. Another couple of decades, and the question of resorting to armed force will be a thing of the past. In Paraguay, since the preceding chapters were written, the change of government, already forecasted by the writer, has now taken place. The democratic press quietly did its work until the time was ripe for action, and as a result we have now a government representing modern ideas of progress and administration. They will have difficulties, of course, as there is always a vast difference between theory and practice. But we must welcome the advent of up-to-date ideas in the backwoods of South America.

At midnight, on Wednesday, the first of July, 1908, the good people of Asuncion were slumbering quietly in their beds, quite unconscious of the stirring events the Fates were preparing for them on the

following day. At least, most of them were safe in the shades of dreamland. But, at that moment, a handful of resolute men—Major Jara and eight companions—might have been seen stealthily approaching the artillery barracks, as though contemplating a burglary. But these men were playing for higher stakes. The officers of the guard were first taken prisoners. Their sleeping fellows shared a like fate. The rank-and-file and half of the regimental officers were waiting to take their share in the drama of the revolution. Under the guidance of Major Jara, the guns were got out and posted in strategic positions at street corners commanding all approaches to the public buildings and the police barracks. When these arrangements were completed, the revolutionary leader next made his way to the quarters of the No. 2 regiment of infantry. Here also all the officers present and the common soldiers were adherents of the revolutionary programme. Some of the soldiers were distributed in blocks of buildings in advantageous positions to control the street traffic. In the meantime, stray vigilantes or people proceeding to the early market were either arrested or turned back. One or two patrols which issued from the police quarters were also quietly taken prisoners. In this manner, the authorities first became aware of what was going on. At daylight on Thursday morning the police—under the command of Garcia—



opened fire upon the soldiery. This volley was briskly returned ; and what with the crackling of musketry and booming of artillery, the newly-awakened citizens thought pandemonium had been let loose. No one had any idea of what had really occurred. The Minister, Benitez, rubbed his sleepy eyes, and hurriedly getting into his clothes, telephoned to ask if Cammandante Nunez was in the infantry barracks. He received a reply in the affirmative, which was not correct. Being suspicious, he routed out the Minister for War, Col. Duarte. That gentleman sallied forth to reconnoitre, but was promptly arrested at the first street corner. The national transport, the ' Libertad,' acting in the interests of the Government, misunderstanding the situation, bombarded their own side, putting shot after shot into the police block. President Ferreira hurried to the scene in a fluster, and, picking up a few customs guards, took his position in the palace, which he held with about a hundred men. All Thursday the rattle of musketry was continuous, and large numbers of civilians received arms from the revolutionary committee and took part in the fray, being distributed in small parties, wherever required. It is suggestive that the government forces received no offers of assistance from volunteers. Ferreira telegraphed to Villa Concepcion for the first regiment of infantry, also to the Commandante at Villa Rica for assistance from





COLONEL ALBINO JARA.

[p.381.]



that quarter. This officer promptly got together about 200 men—most of them dragged from their farm work at a moment's notice ; poor beggars, who could not hit a haystack with a shot gun, and who did not actually know whether they were fighting for the Government or the revolution. These people—with a few soldiers of the garrison—arrived in Asuncion on Thursday night. This was the first and last contingent from the interior, as the rebels destroyed a couple of railway bridges and cut the telegraph wires. The Government were thus shut in like rats in a hole, the brick buildings in which they sheltered proving veritable death traps ; cannon balls crashed through, knocking down ceilings and partitions, crushing numbers of victims underneath the ruins. Once only they made a sally, but were repulsed by the fire of machine guns. There was small chance to run away, and, in any case, they were mortally afraid of their chief and a man named Lucero, whom he had placed in charge of a detachment. When night approached, there was a temporary cessation of hostilities, the silence being broken by occasional discharges of musketry. On Friday morning, the revolutionists having received large reinforcements of volunteers, gradually closed in and finally stormed the police block, the Theatre Nacional, and the Banco Agricola, confining the Government forces to the Palace, the

municipal offices, the Cathedral, and the railway stations. Senor Rafael Barret organised the Red Cross people, and, with the assistance of a number of gentlemen and ladies, attended to the wounded, and had them conveyed to the hospital. I have not heard of non-combatants being molested in any way ; but, sad to say, during this reckless bombardment a few women and children fell victims to spent balls and the falling portions of their houses. On Friday, the transport ' Libertad ' turned over to the rebels, doing good work by preventing the landing of the Villa Concepcion garrison. Upon getting a correct version of what had occurred, this regiment also joined the revolutionary party. Under these circumstances, the position of the Government was hopeless. In the meantime, all the country towns had become recruiting centres. Before people knew what was going on, hundreds were trapped by the recruiting commission and marched in to barracks, sorely against their will. These poor people take no interest in political matters, and only ask to be left alone in peace and quietness to lead their simple lives. After the first day every one went into hiding, as the only form of passive resistance with which they are acquainted. Horses and arms were commandeered for military service, and these raw levies concentrated in Villa Rica. Every one was wonderfully well behaved, and foreigners were treated



with uniform respect everywhere. During Friday night most of the Government forces in Asuncion dispersed or surrendered. On Saturday morning none remained, except the small contingent in the Palace with General Ferreira. The rebel forces closed in promptly, and the conqueror of General Caballero was compelled to hand over his sword and sign his resignation as President of the Republic. He and most of his ministry were kept as hostages until matters had settled down. Elias Garcia and a few others escaped to the Argentine Consulate. The casualties resulting from these three days' fighting in the capital are variously estimated at from 400 to 500, including killed and wounded.

One of the causes of the fall of this Government was easily comprehensible because of their employment of Argentine and Uruguayan officers, whose harsh methods were not to be endured by the more gentle-minded Paraguayans. The new Government represent the Young Paraguayan Party. There is no doubt as to their good intentions. The moot point is whether they are to prove sufficiently practical to deal with the situation. In a country where honesty as the best policy is quite a new ideal, it will be far from an easy matter to get together an honest administration. They have rightly grasped the idea that financial shuffling can only at the best give temporary relief, and propose to encourage production in every way

possible. This is quite correct. But an extensive development of natural resources is only possible after removing the direct and indirect expenses resulting from high freights, red tape, and the quite unnecessary customhouse restrictions common to all South American countries. Even articles which are supposed to go duty free do not escape these expenses. As these lines are being written on the river boat at La Paz, I see a vessel unloading North American lumber for Entre Rios, cut by workmen earning from two to three dollars gold per day, and transported thousands of miles across the stormy seas, while a little further up the river, we touch the borders of a million square miles of primaeval forest, which has not so far even heard the ring of the woodman's axe. What are we to say of the folly which is responsible for such a state of affairs? The Argentine is largely to blame in these matters. At present, she has it in her power to win over the sister Republic by tact and mutual trade concessions. The weaker country would be only too glad to make one of a federation of Spanish-speaking Republics. Later on, who knows? In a few years' time, when Brazil has completed her strategic railways from the Atlantic Coast to the Iguassu, and in the North from San Pablo to the Alto-Parana, we shall see what we shall see. The big additions to the Brazilian fleet will be completed about that time. However the thing

goes, it must work out for good in the end. This direct menace to the independence of the Spanish-speaking River Plate Republics must result in closer union. But in the interval, there may be an unpleasant quarter of an hour for some people.

The Paraguayan peasantry are planting a good deal of tobacco. This industry is peculiarly suited to the genius of the race ; and there is no reason why this country should not rival Cuba in the production of high-class tobaccos. It is fortunate that political matters have been settled promptly ; and equally satisfactory to know that the best men in the country are going to have a chance to carry their ideas of reform from the realms of theory into actual practice for the good of their country. It is very much to be regretted that so far there is no strong foreign element in the country to help them on their way, and prevent a repetition of the necessity to bespatter the walls of their public buildings and churches with bullet-marks before being able to realize their ideals of peace and brotherhood for all.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### BACKWOODS LIFE

It is a far cry from London or New York, with their motor-cars, electric tramways, and luxurious living, to the woods of Central South America. Yet the Indians of the stone age, hacking out honey with their little flint hatchets, may easily be reached in a few days by steam and rail from Buenos Ayres or Monte Video. Quite recently, sport and business alike called upon the writer to make another journey in Central Paraguay. The long forest cuttings and tropical vegetation were all familiar—the wealth of timber and immense reserves of cane and other natural forage plants in the Montes, where old bullocks and bulls hide away in the winter and come out in the spring as fat as mud. The leafage of the ‘Tacuarembó’ and ‘Tacuapi’ will give an animal a good feed, almost without turning in its own length. Of course small animals cannot be allowed in until the jaguars are killed off. Once north of Caaguassu the country rapidly improves. We mostly find high





COOKING UPON A RAFT.



rolling camps dotted with 'Iatahy' palms and covered with sweet wholesome grasses. Some of these camps are indeed sandy, and are partly covered with tufts of wiry coarse grasses, as formerly in the unrefined camps of Buenos Ayres. But there is always quite a lot of good pasturage in between. Horses, sheep, and cattle do remarkably well if looked after. The camps, of course, must be wired in to prevent the spread of contagious diseases from live stock passing from Corrientes to Matto Grosso, and, in the case of sheep, wire netting or shepherding would be required to protect them from the attacks of noxious animals, as also the periodical importation of rams from cold climates in order to prevent the wool degenerating into hair. This simple expedient enables the Australians to produce high-class sheep and wool right up to the Gulf of Carpentaria—the hottest part of the world excepting, perhaps, the Persian Gulf. During three hundred years of neglect, the wool of Paraguayan sheep has already become coarse and streaky. In North Africa one may see sheep where the process has gone still further, and the animals merely have a thin coat of short hair like that of a greyhound, in such a climate nature not requiring either wool or fat to keep up internal heat.

The town of Yhu, some twelve leagues north of Caaguassu, might be an ideal sanatorium or winter resort for people suffering from lung diseases in the

Southern Provinces, being situated in high rolling country, well drained and possessing a delightful climate for the greater part of the year. Another long picada or forest cutting takes us into the Bella Vista and Palomari country, the camps and cattle always improving as we go north ; particularly as here, on the watershed of the tributaries of the two great rivers, the arroyos are all fine, clear, rapid running streams, with nice clean water. In times of rain it is necessary to swim one's horses over to the opposite bank. Some of the Montes are of considerable extent, such as the Caaguassu-San Joaquin Monte, which must have an area of much more than a hundred leagues. Unknown animals hide away in its fastnesses, and the untamed Guajaki Indian wanders from place to place, depending entirely for sustenance upon his bow and arrow and the little stone axe used in Britain thousands of years ago.

The Guajaki is in some respects a hero. Just fancy a naked man and woman stranded in a tropical forest, exposed to the attacks of mosquitoes, ticks, and other insect pests. They have no tools. A blade of tough cane grass serves as a knife. The axe represents the labour of weeks or months, and the bow and arrows, carved out of hard wood, the concrete evidence of unremitting toil and tireless skill of a most fastidious artist. Fire is carried from place to place in a piece of smouldering fungus. Yet they do manage to live,



and have put the fear of judgement into the prowling jaguar. Fortunately, pigs, tapir, and deer are numerous, as also a certain amount of wild honey. Yet the seeking of this sweet dainty is often their undoing. If a party of native hunters hear the tapping of the Indian's axe, they sneak up quietly and murder the poor wretch up in the tree with no more compunction than if they were killing a monkey. I asked one of these fellows why they killed these people without provocation. He shrugged his shoulders and replied, 'Quien sabe.' Don't you know that the skin of an Indian is tougher than any other for making hammocks or 'guascas' for carrying yerba leaves? Will not some good souls take the matter up, and see that these wild men of the woods get some protection? It is true the poor beggars sometimes are compelled by hunger to kill a cow or a horse, but for three hundred years every man's hand has been against them. On sight of their fellow man they fly like a wild animal—and with reason—for they are often hunted with dogs for sport. No one knows their language, and their children, who have been taken by Paraguayans, even if they escape after a few years, would be looked upon as spies and killed. I am ashamed to say that one European estanciero up there, now owning several large cattle ranches, who arrived in Paraguay without a cent, has been urging the local authorities to destroy

these Indians, threatening to withdraw his interests from the country. Only six short months ago, some estancia peons, guided by two tame Cangwah Indians, made a night raid upon a group of sleeping Guajakis. The first man seen was shot, the rest stampeded in all directions. Two of the children were seized. These screamed pitifully, and the father, a fine bearded man, came back to the rescue brandishing a club. The poor fellow was mercilessly shot. How long shall these things be?

The other tribe, the Cangwah, are quiet, peaceable folk, cultivating maize, mandioca, beans, pea-nuts, &c., having some distinct and valuable varieties of these plants. Their bows and arrows are good and quite artistic, indeed, the best I have seen, not even excepting the collections in the British Museum. They are remarkably fond of animal pets, and in the Palomari picada I met a few families on the move with quite a collection of household parrots, macaws, and other birds which they carried sitting on long sticks over their shoulders. The jaguars kill their dogs, but rarely molest human beings unless they sleep out carelessly, or are hunted. Indeed, this animal is extinct in the settled districts, and is only to be found away back where plenty of pigs, carpinchos, &c., are obtainable in the way of food.

Still, up in these Northern wilds, the jaguar is



INTERIOR OF A WAREHOUSE :  
CENSI AND PIROTTA, IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION.





often in evidence. My native companion knew the history of every cross by the roadside ; and some of his stories of the great feline were rather startling. Half-way through the great Caaguassu 'picada,' near by the sparkling waters of a lovely creek, rests the mortal remains of a poor woman, who was killed at that spot by a jaguar some years ago. She was sleeping in a hammock, slung underneath the bullock cart, when the animal sprang up and dragged her to the ground. Her son, who was sleeping by the fire, took hold of a flaming branch and drove the tiger off. Then the peons from the other cart came to the rescue, and attempted to lift the wounded woman into the covered body of the 'caretta.' But the ferocious beast returned to the attack, and dragged the hapless creature out of their grasp, escaping with his burden into the darkness of the forest. The terrified cartmen could hear him crunching away at the bones all the livelong night. In the morning they recovered the torn fragments of the body, and, digging out a hole in the banks by the crossing, erected a rude cross to mark the spot. These creeks are the favourite resting-places of travellers during the long journey in this forest cutting. At yet another encampment, we saw the usual sign of a tragedy. In this case a young man, on his way from Caaguassu to Villa Rica, tethered his horse out in a grassy glade for a rest and feed,

while he himself took a siesta in the shade of the wood. Leaning back against the stem of a tree, he pulled his 'sombrero' over his eyes, and was soon far away in the realms of dreamland. How long this lasted he never knew. Till a stealthy yellow and brown form glided noiselessly through the undergrowth and sprang upon the sleeping man. Although taken by surprise, the youngster made a good fight. Drawing a clasp-knife from his pocket, he plunged it again and again into the body of his assailant. Later on, some travellers passing by found both man and beast lying side by side on the ground, where they had fought their last fight. The tiger of the first story, who had killed the woman, was eventually destroyed in a curious manner. Becoming bold from his previous success, he one night attacked some men in a bullock cart, but was driven off. However, being disappointed in not getting a man for supper, he dragged off a dried bullock hide, used to cover the end of the tilt in case of rain. Apparently, this was too tough and dry to manipulate, for next day a hunting party beat the forest for him, and found the beast concealed in the bushes lying underneath the hide. A fusilade of shots ended his career of delinquencies.

In the winter when really hungry, the jaguar will sometimes break into storehouses after the dried meat used for feeding the peons in the yerbales. One very

funny instance occurred recently at a forest encampment up there. A man and his wife were sleeping peacefully in an improvised bed in front of a rancho, with a blanket stretched over them in the form of an awning for protection from the dew. All of a sudden, a huge jaguar sneaked up, and with a spring on to the blanket, landed right on top of them. The shrieks and terror of the astonished couple can be better imagined than described. Fortunately, a male companion, sleeping by the fire, came to the rescue with a fire-stick, and thus was able to convert a probable tragedy into a scene of sylvan comedy.

As I am writing these lines, I have notice of yet another fatal incident which occurred the other day on one of my old hunting grounds. The Indians are really past masters in the art of woodcraft and most expert with their bows and arrows; but they have a few old firearms, which are often more dangerous to the hunters than the hunted. Two of these fellows, armed with such-like obsolete weapons, found the trail of a jaguar in the Yuqury forest. A little dog taking up the scent in the lead, followed by its dusky master, revolver in hand, and backed up by a second Indian, carrying a gun. Finally tracing their quarry to a clump of ferns, the creature sprang out in pursuit of the dog. This naturally fled to his master for protection. The latter pointed his weapon and pulled the



trigger. Click, click ! But like many cheap revolvers, the thing would not go off. In a moment the tiger was on top of him. But the man was strong, and lusty, and brave, making a good fight with his bare hands, finally, by a superhuman effort, pitching the savage animal by main strength into a clump of bushes, when he slunk off and declined a further encounter. The other man stood by doing nothing, as a mere spectator—too much paralysed with stupidity to go to the aid of his companion. He said afterwards that he even forgot that he had a loaded gun in his hands. The wounded man managed to get home with some difficulty, but eventually died from his injuries. Then a hunting party of twenty-five Indians took the warpath with their dogs and, after tracking up their enemy, succeeded in putting an end to him.

One of the strangest freaks of Johnny 'Spots' took place right in the town of Caaguassu some little time ago. The people of the house had been crushing sugar-cane for a few days, and at night the temporary peons slept, lying here and there upon the floor of the verandah. This jaguar was evidently bent upon a scientific study of ethnology. Disdaining to notice a fat calf, which was tied up on the lawn, he carefully threaded his way amongst the sleeping forms of the people on the ground, finally entering a bedroom, and seizing hold of the lady of the house. The screams of



the poor old woman and the pandemonium which ensued, scared the wits out of the tiger, and he fled incontinently to the forest, taking the calf, which he had formerly despised, as a consolation for his reverses. Not much wonder that the simple folk up there are not quite certain to this day whether it was really a tiger, after all, or a nocturnal visit of the Evil One himself to punish the old lady for her sins. For such contingencies as this, the people are provided with a varied assortment of charms—and usually a necklace, with cross attached—to guard the wearers from all ill.

It is probable that the Dinosaurus existed in Paraguay until comparatively recent times—if, indeed, it is really extinct. At all events, the Indians faithfully describe a creature of that kind, called, in their language, the 'Teju-jagua' (Iguana-dog). It is not known how the myth originated, but the story goes that there is still one of the monsters chained up in a cavern in the Sierras of Villa Rica.

## FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

---

If people really desire the 'Dolce far Niente' sort of thing in the way of existence, Paraguay is an ideal country. There is always a nice orange grove to swing one's hammock in without any danger of the vulgarities of civilized life coming along to disturb your siesta, and there is absolutely nothing—except an occasional falling orange, and your own perversity—to prevent you from attaining unto the blessed state of 'Nirvana.' You worried, hurried, scurried sons and daughters of the cities think the life might be a paradise. And, indeed, you can never really know until you have a try and find out for yourself if it is possible for you to realize the joys of the blessed on this earth. If you bring along the right conditions, it is not only possible but certain. The fun to be obtained out of dogs and cats, fowls and cows and horses—all one's very own—has to be realized to be appreciated. The foods of the country are easily obtainable, and you may be sure you will have no enemy except yourself. Really, millions of the poor, who are grinding their lives out for a mean existence amidst the filth and squalor of great cities, would be infinitely better off away out on the land in new countries. Whether the first generations would appreciate their advantages is another question. That depends upon an education to which few people attain nowadays. And—other things.







## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE TROPICS OR TEMPERATE ZONES

ONE of the things which no fellow can understand in South America is why settlement and capital are being pushed right away to the dreary wastes of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, while the North is being kept in reserve as the heritage of the future. It is true that in the South the woolly-back gives most satisfactory returns for a minimum of exertion of intelligence and labour, and that the climate is indeed most invigorating when it doesn't kill outright. Yet few people would hesitate between a blizzard or a thunderstorm; a dark, cheerless winter or a hot summer; a tropical forest or a black waterless plain. Even if we come farther north and compare the fruits of the earth, is there really very much to choose between wheat and maize; the banana or the apple; the potato or the yam; the orange or the grape; the pineapple or the plum? And, so on, *ad infinitum*. If considered on the basis of economic value and

returns for labour, the tropics mostly have the best of it. Again, I ask, why don't people go north? It must surely be ignorance of opportunity, and partly, perhaps, political prejudices. As a case in point, south of the Parana, the cheapest camps are 50,000 dollars Argentine per league; on the other side of the river, in Paraguayan territory, the same class of camps—rather better if anything—identical in climate, insect pests, &c., fetch only about one-third of that sum. Politically there is not much to choose, except that there is certainly very much better security for life and property in Paraguay than in Corrientes. Within the last year I have been through Entre Rios, Corrientes, and Paraguay up to near the Matto Grosso frontier; and although I am not the fortunate owner of any of these lands I must say that by far the best camps I saw were in North Central Paraguay. I write these things to show that there is a future for the hot parts of the country. The good old temperate zones are being crowded, and somebody must make a move or be squeezed out of existence in the competitive struggle for life. Too keen a competition cripples some people and limits their scope in life, either because they can't or won't condescend to defend themselves. These unfortunates are usually called weaklings nowadays, and unkind things are often said about them. Worse than that, they often receive unkind treatment. Well, in the

tropics there is room for all, both weak and strong. Good wholesome foods may be produced with a minimum of labour. Nature may easily be harnessed so as to produce all the essentials of life. People who have opportunity might chose either the tropic or temperate zones, but there are or will be billions yet unborn who will have no choice whatever in the matter if they are to fill the functions of manhood and womanhood, to increase and multiply, to enjoy the good things of life—leading good clean lives and being able to hold up their heads in the face of all men. In the tropics lies the future of the race, and much of the past as well. As previously stated, all of the great indigenous civilizations—absolutely without exceptions—originated in hot countries. Take Egypt, Saba and Chaldea, or Mexico, Central America and Peru. The inhabitants of cold countries borrowed, elaborated, or built upon the foundation already prepared for them. But was it not a much greater achievement for the Ancient Egyptian to start with his naked body and untrained intellect to originate and build up one of the greatest civilizations the world has ever seen?

So we see history points the way and gives us encouragement. After all, what is there to choose between a fur jacket or a silken blouse? Indeed there is a matter of compulsion. We cannot each of us

have a sealskin jacket. There are not enough to go round; but we may all have the silken blouse. The more the merrier. It is good to people the waste places of the South, as also to develop the wasted riches of the North. As to the possibilities of home-making, there is no doubt whatever—except perhaps as to the inclination to make a home—a sufficient number of such people will establish a complete social unit, and be in a position to work out their own salvation.

From the capitalistic point of view there are good openings. Recently I saw sugar plantations on the East coast of Africa—under like labour conditions—making immense fortunes for their happy owners with sugar at a penny-halfpenny a pound in the London market. In Paraguay there is a considerable market at treble that price, and equal chances with East African sugar for any surplus over local requirements.

Given space and inclination, one might show many similar openings in Paraguay. There are rubber, yerba, tobacco, cattle, and no end of minor industries. In the near future, men must move to the tropics, either as a matter of choice or compulsion. The other day in London, Lord Curzon made a remarkable speech, in which he braved the wrath of Mother Grundy and her numerous relations. He stated that we have two classes of loafers, of which the club loafer



was the more reprehensible. If these people who are generally bored to death in their search after some new sensation would only get out and do things, they would be much happier and better members of society. England has set an example to the world in these matters. And many of her rich are out in the wilds doing things which will make history.

In any case, the bad old days when the equatorial regions were considered the white man's grave have passed away, and the eyes of the world to-day are turned with expectancy towards the fair lands of sunshine, where Nature is seen at her best. Many people in the past generation were disposed to fight the pestiferous climate with unlimited whiskies and soda, turning night into day in order to avoid the health-giving rays of sunshine, getting up at ten o'clock in the morning with a very bad headache, sweltering for a few hours at mid-day in a musty old office, and filling in the intervals between work and play with curses on the climate, which invariably disordered a fellow's liver in spite of such careful hygienic treatment. Now, however, we know that climatic diseases—as such—are non-existent, being due to the presence of animal or fungoid parasites, and that good food, regular habits, and a fair amount of physical exercise in the open air are indispensable if we desire to keep fit—alike in the tropics or the

Arctic regions. Malaria, it is true, remains to be conquered. But, after all, the fevers of the tropics are but a small set-off against the lung diseases of colder climates ; and it has recently been discovered that the run-down condition and malnutrition of adults and children formerly considered to be the result of malarious influences is really due to the presence of millions of tiny parasites in the intestines, which rob the food passing through those organs of its most essential elements, and render the remnant actually poisonous by means of their excrement. Consequently, the human victim of these uninvited guests suffers from a chronic state of semi-starvation. People who live most upon animal foods—such as meat, milk, eggs, &c.—which are to a great extent digested in the stomach—naturally suffer less than those whose vegetarian diet is digested in the part of the alimentary canal infested by these parasites. For this reason the symptoms vary somewhat according to the stage of the disease and the idiosyncrasies of the individual. However, in every case, they are well marked, and in the tropics, sub-tropics, or north temperate zones need never be mistaken. The one invariable development is poverty of blood. Resultant symptoms follow in the way of general debility, heart weakness, languor, irritable temperament, pulsation of the arteries, a quick and weak pulse, palpitation



GROUP OF PARAGUAYAN LADIES, CARAPEGUA.

*From left to right: Standing—*Constanca Brizuela, Josefa Sanchez, Avela Rodriguez, Josefa Rodriguez, Dominga Cabello, Casimira Giménez. *Seated—*Emilia Mosqueira, Olinda Haisman, Isabel Brizuela, Gregoria Giménez.





of the heart, and shortness of the breath on exertion, pallid or yellowish complexion, puffiness under the eyelids upon getting up in the morning, and dropsical swelling of the ankles and feet, more accentuated towards the evening, and disappearing at night; cramps in the hands or feet upon getting cold; headaches, neuralgia, toothache, vertigo, and sometimes febrile disturbances easily mistaken for malaria.

The occasional presence or absence of a few of these symptoms does not constitute any proof of the presence or absence of the disease, as tape worm and other diseases easily distinguished may produce a few of them, in different combinations.

By means of actual experiment the writer has ascertained that the eggs of the South American variety of the parasite hatch out in a suitable culture in about thirty-five days. Therefore, any one may get absolute proof by keeping a small portion of excrement in a small test tube or phial for from thirty to forty days, when, by means of a microscope, thousands of snaky-like creatures will be seen crawling inside the glass. Extreme care must be taken that no fly, however small, gains access to the culture, or the minute larvae of certain species of insects may be mistaken for the true worm. This experiment may fail sometimes for want of care and skilful observation. The history and origin of the parasite is somewhat obscure. It is

supposed that, like the Guinea worm, it often gains access to the human body through the soles of the feet in damp ground or mud, also very much more probably by eating uncooked fruit or vegetable salads. It has been suggested that it may be swallowed with drinking water. This is extremely improbable, as, by actual test, the writer has proved that the embryo dies almost immediately in water, and that the eggs will not hatch out in the ordinary culture after being immersed in water for a couple of weeks. The hopes for the extirpation of the disease seem to depend upon the destruction of the motions containing the eggs. However, much remains to be discovered in these matters.

The expulsion of the worm from the human body is somewhat difficult, as the mucous membrane of the bowels becomes ulcerated, and eggs, parent worm, and young are often hidden beneath crusts, and thus escape the transient effects of ordinary vermifuge medicines. Consequently, repeated treatment must be persevered in for a period of over seventy days to cover the possibility of successive batches of young being hatched out. Although there are other drugs more efficacious and pleasant in action, I prefer first to give the formula employed at present in a West Indian hospital solely devoted to the treatment of patients affected by this disease, as being fairly

effective and perfectly safe—if the necessary precautions are observed.

First, by way of preparation, an ounce of sulphate of soda, by preference, as a purge taken fasting at night. At six o'clock in the morning a thirty-grain or two-grammes dose of powdered thymol in capsules. At eight o'clock another thirty-grain dose of thymol, followed by another purge at ten o'clock (children of four to five years may take eight grains thymol each dose, over that according to age). No food to be taken until the afternoon. No alcoholic beverage, oils, or fatty matter to be taken upon any account for a day previous or after the treatment, as the thymol may be dissolved thereby and become an active poison. This treatment must be repeated every eight or ten days until two and a half months have elapsed, iron being taken as a tonic in the intervals. By that time the cure should be permanent. If taken for a shorter period, the disease will probably recur. Basing his ideas upon the period required for the incubation of the parasite, the author has formulated a new system of treatment which has proved very much more effective and pleasant. First, the usual preparatory dose of sulphate of soda, taken early in the morning, the day being passed fasting, or at most only drinking a very little milk at mid-day, continuing at six o'clock in the evening with sixty drops of oil of eucalyptus,



to be followed up early the next morning with thirty grains of powdered thymol (never in solution) in capsule or mixed with the least possible quantity of honey; a similar dose taken in the same way two hours later. *No after purgative to be taken*; and the day to be passed fasting in the recumbent position, in order to permit the undissolved drug to remain as long as possible in contact with the surface of the intestines. The treatment should be repeated several times at intervals of forty days in order to destroy successive batches of worms, which may possibly hatch out about those periods. In bad cases, an extra dose may be necessary in order to effect a permanent cure; of course, the same precautions being observed as to the use of oils or fats and alcohol.

These observations are published for the use of people who are beyond the reach of a specialist, or perhaps who could not afford to pay for his services if available; and because such information as may be obtainable so far is not accessible to the people who require it most.

The writer knows, after a long residence in the tropics, exactly what it means to be compelled to discover all these facts independently, without the benefit of other people's experience in other parts of the world. The Porto Rico Medical Association has taken the lead in a crusade with the object of



extirpating the disease. With the practical knowledge of these up-to-date Associations for the Study of Tropical Medicine, one may now take up one's residence in any part of the tropics with the assurance that as far as health is concerned we incur less risk of trouble than in the so-called temperate regions where cold winters are contrasted with the more than tropical heat of the ensuing summer.

The splendid physique of the pure bred descendants of the early Portuguese and Spanish settlers in tropical South America, being in every way superior to their ancestral races in Europe, is a practical demonstration of this fact, proved by the experience of these people during three hundred years in the country. Moreover—contrary to Sir Harry Johnston's theory—the whites show the greater vitality—and are slowly and surely absorbing the coloured races, except, perhaps, on the North coast of Brazil, where the climate is so unpleasant that the European usually declines to settle permanently, while his black brother is mostly too poor and ignorant to have a choice in the matter. In Paraguay even the common peasant will tell you that the white man is more 'Guapo'; that is, stronger, and with greater resisting power to disease. Of course—in the tropics as elsewhere—one frequently observes the degeneracy owing to habits of pampering and effeminacy.

## A MILKMAID IN THE TROPICS

---

The cow with the short tail is not, as might be supposed, a freak of nature, but, on the contrary, a fine specimen of a distinct breed, in which the caudal appendage is only developed to about half its usual length. They are supposed to be extra good for milking purposes. The shortness of the tail is certainly a comfort to the person who does the milking, as, in this case, a flick in the eye with a dirty caudal extremity becomes an impossibility. Breeders might do worse than take a hint in the development of their dairy herds. Perhaps some day our famous 'shorthorns' may be ousted from their place in the cow yard by a new breed of 'short tails.' The dairying industry might have a great future in Paraguay. The local markets are good for limited quantities of dairy products. But beyond that, cheese could be sold at a handsome profit in the European markets at half the current prices of home-made products. The factors which would contribute to this result are the prices of land, continuous growth of pasturage throughout the year, and absence of the depressing effects of a long winter. Dairy cows would for a time have to be imported from the Argentine, or else a herd could be established by the slower process of selection of the best milkers from the local breeds of cattle. By partially stall-feeding the animals and utilizing banana fodder in the manner first discovered by the author, great results can be attained. The Paraguayans follow the impossible custom of allowing the calf to suck its mother while they are milking. Such cows, of course, will not let down their milk without the calf, and the little creature drinks the milk to the tune of something like four times its ultimate value during the first year of its life. The use of butter and cheese is becoming general in South America as the country is becoming more civilized.







## CHAPTER XXX

### HISTORICAL NOTES

THE early years of the sixteenth century marked a period of romance for the Spanish adventurers in South America. The marvellous treasures of Mexico and Peru opened up unbounded possibilities to the poor of old Spain. Simple herdsmen and farm labourers found their way out to the New World in the train of their feudal masters, and, sharing in the loot of the Incas, became wealthy beyond their utmost dreams of avarice. The excesses and absurd extravagances of these newly rich can only be compared to the freaks of successful gold miners in the early days of California and Australia, who often, out of sheer bravado, lit their pipes with ten-pound notes, and refreshed their weary bodies with a bath of champagne. Many of them afterwards died in extreme poverty, when the golden harvest was exhausted. The Spaniards suffered from the slow and imperfect means of communication of those days. To reach Peru then, as

now, it was necessary to cross the Isthmus of Panama and take ship once more to run down the Western Coast. Little or nothing was known of the geographical details of the Continent, and hardy pioneers, fired with the ambition of discovering a new Arcadia, cut their way through tropical forests, crossed snow-clad mountains, encountered the perils of long journeys amongst savage Indians, and circumnavigated the Continent in their search for Eldorado. On one of these voyages, Sebastian Gaboto, under the patronage of Charles the Fifth, found his way up the great river of the Pampas, as far as Paraguay, during the year 1525. Thinking this stream might afford a natural highway to the mines of Peru, it was named the Rio de la Plata, the River of Silver. In modern times only the estuary below the confluence of the Rio Uruguay with the Parana is known by this appellation. Some ten years later, Don Pedro Mendoza founded the city of Buenos Ayres, the city of Good Air. Still persisting in the idea of finding a waterway to Peru, Don Juan Ayolas organized an expedition to explore the great river in its course through the tropic forests of the North. Probably these men were too ignorant and avaricious to appreciate the marvels of their explorations: the perfect sea of swirling waters, where frequently neither one bank nor the other was visible; the thousand islands dotting the stream for

the first twelve hundred miles of its course ; the shoals of lazy alligators basking in sunshine on the sandbanks ; and the painted Indian warriors who watched the Argonauts from the shores. The first deviation from the flat alluvial plains of the Pampas is 1,100 miles up the river, where a tiny hill appears on the Paraguayan side. This is named 'Lambare,' after the Indian Cacique who was defeated by the explorers at this place. Ayolas considered the spot suitable for the formation of a base of operations, and founded a fort a short distance higher up where the river opens out into a nice bay, with the object of affording protection against the attacks of the Guaranis. He himself, with part of his company, continued onwards in pursuit of the original intention of finding a way to Peru. But the brave explorer was never destined to reach the land of the Incas, falling in an ambushade amongst the Paraguayan Indians. The remnant of the expedition, about a hundred men, concentrated in a fort at Lambare, and thus founded the city of Asuncion. The leader Irala proceeded to form a permanent settlement, entering into friendly relations with the Indians. Fish in abundance was obtainable from the river, as also deer, wild pigs, and other kinds of game on the mainland and in the Chaco. The Guaranis cultivated several varieties of maize, mandioca, beans, and pea-nuts. So in such a mild

climate, the early settlers suffered none of the physical hardships which fell to the lot of their fellows in the northern half of the Continent.

Irala was superseded in 1540 by Cabeza de Vaca, who was sent from Spain to take charge of the new colony. This man involved the Spanish in quarrels with the natives, and thus becoming unpopular, was formally arrested and deported to old Spain, Irala being reinstated in his office—as his previous experience and services justly merited. Matters being on a satisfactory footing locally, the Governor made a journey through the Chaco and actually reached the Bolivian Cordilleras—on his way to Peru. The Indians, either by inclination or compulsion, gradually accepted the rule of the newcomers, paying for their protection either in country produce, or by way of forced labour. The soil being somewhat light and sandy near Asuncion, the people gradually began to spread out into the country. The grape vine and other European fruits and vegetables were introduced with varying degrees of success. In 1602, it is said that there were several million vines in the neighbourhood of Asuncion, and that wine was exported to Buenos Ayres. For some reason the industry died out after the expulsion of the Jesuits, probably for want of skilled supervision. People are just beginning again to take an interest in the business. In 1546 seven cows and a bull were





LAPIERRE AND CO.,  
GENERAL MERCHANTS AND CIGAR AND TOBACCO EXPORTERS, ASUNCION.



imported from Europe, and became the progenitors of all the enormous herds which form the principal wealth of all the River Plate countries to-day. The rate of increase in these virgin pastures may be imagined when it is said that in his time the historian and traveller Azara estimated the number of cattle in the Plate at 18,000,000 head. In modern times these animals have been crossed in the South with the best European breeds, and in the North with a strain of the African Zebu or humped cattle. In Paraguay, Corrientes, and some remote estancias in the Argentine, they remain mostly in their original state. The hides are the best in the world ; but the animals are inferior for meat or milking purposes, having been allowed to run practically wild for hundreds of years. Indeed, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, vast herds of cattle and horses roamed the plains to all intents and purposes in a state of nature, the property of any one who cared to make use of them. In 1550 the first sheep were also introduced, the forerunners of the countless flocks descended from them in the Argentine and Uruguay. These animals did not do so well locally, requiring more attention than the first settlers were disposed to give them. A fair number, however, still exist in the South of the Republic.

In 1557 Irala died, deplored by all the inhabitants

of the colony he had founded. Various subsidiary colonies were formed on the opposite banks of the river in the Chaco, but were eventually all abandoned in favour of the superior attractions of the higher lands in the country of the Guaranis. Settlements gradually spread out in the south and centre of the country until there were quite a number of small towns under Spanish dominion. The townspeople mostly had plantations outside, which were usually worked by Indian serfs. In the meantime, the Jesuits collected the remainder of the Indians into mission settlements, where they were christianized and civilized up to a certain point. The story of the Jesuits is related more fully elsewhere in a chapter specially devoted to the subject. Spanish rule continued in Paraguay until the year 1811, when, after the expulsion of the Government authorities from the South American countries, Paraguay also declared its independence.

From 1811 to 1840 we find an interesting development of partial State Socialism—under the despotic rule of Dr. Francia. His idea was to isolate the country, permitting none of the native born to leave their Fatherland on any account, and admitting foreigners only on condition that if they wished to settle in Paraguay, they might do so, if considered desirable citizens. If they desired to return to their own country,



they must leave behind them all wealth gained in the land of their adoption. A certain amount of fruit planting and agriculture was compulsory, and crime was punished so rigorously that the fear of judgment was placed upon all evil-doers. In those times people left their doors and windows open day and night as a matter of course with a feeling of perfect security. This state of beneficent despotism was continued till the year 1862 by Don Carlos Antonio Lopez.

After the death of this wise ruler, he was succeeded by his son Francisco Solano Lopez. This young man had tasted of the gaities of life in Madrid, Paris, and London. He saw some active service in the Crimea, and brought back to Paraguay an insatiable ambition and a desire to pose as the Napoleon of South America, also an Anglo-Frenchwoman—Madame Lynch—who was destined to have a malign influence on the future of the country. Lopez had some good ideas. He introduced English engineers and mechanics, established foundries, placed trade on a sound footing by means of State-owned steamers, and encouraged industry. But, unfortunately, the man was not content with the prosperity thus created. Taking advantage of a rupture in River Plate politics, he seized a Brazilian man-of-war in the river, invaded and conquered Matto Grosso; then, being refused permission

to advance through Argentine territory to attack Rio Grande, Lopez captured several gunboats belonging to that Republic in the river, occupied the city of Corrientes, and, finally, marched through the province with an army of ten thousand men to Rio Grande. This action naturally resulted in a coalition against him by the forces of both Brazil and the Argentine. Uruguay was reluctantly compelled to join this alliance for hostilities against Paraguay. Deprived of aid in this quarter, and disappointed in the attitude of Entre Rios, the army in Corrientes was demoralized by the distance from its base and, finally, broken up. In 1866 Paraguay was invaded by the armies of the 'Triple Alliance.' Lopez exercised considerable ingenuity. A chain barrier was fixed across the river, which made it impossible for the enemy's gunboats to pass upwards under the fire of the forts on either side. For five long years the little country held out, being cut off from the world for the whole period. Little by little they were driven back. *Wooden* cannon for fortifications were improvised from the trunks of tough, almost unsplitable hard woods of the forests ; an idea which might sometimes be made use of with advantage in modern warfare, in cases where it was not desirable to risk the loss of permanent artillery. Most of the men either perished in the war or died of hunger or sickness. The story of the tragedy is related

elsewhere. Lopez was finally defeated and killed at Cerro Cora in 1870.

This war had one good result. It left the people who survived free. Serfdom came to an end as the natural course of events. A constitution, modelled on that of the United States, was declared, and a new era commenced. During the war the 4,000,000 of horned cattle had diminished to 15,000. During the next few years hundreds of thousands were imported from the neighbouring Republics to occupy the vacant pasturelands. These have bred up until the number now existing far exceeds the original quantity. The surviving people had a hard time for the first year or so, existing to a great extent upon oranges and the fruit of the coco palm. The pulp and kernel of these small nuts is very nutritious. Millions are found growing everywhere in the riverine districts, and there is a probable future for the oil. It is used locally for soap-making and other purposes. The population of the country now amounts to 760,000. There is a considerable foreign element in the towns intermixed with the descendants of the old Spanish Colonists, and in the outskirts, generally a lower element of the half-caste Spanish and Guarani. In these mixed races one cannot notice much difference except that they are inordinately fond of music and the dance, and absolutely refuse to take life seriously. They have not



been compelled to do so as yet. Perhaps such people are wise in their generation. One result of this apathy is that the Government is necessarily an oligarchy. The townspeople are now rightly ambitious to be up-to-date in everything, but sometimes make mistakes and forget that learning the letter of things does not always mean a comprehension of the spirit of reform ideas. Moreover—like some other people—they are sometimes ashamed of their good old virtues and traditions which should be held to the end of time. Simplicity is the first of all virtues, and the only basis of greatness of character. Educational institutions are now pretty well spread over the populated districts, and the percentage of wholly illiterate people will be very small in another decade. Some half-dozen daily newspapers are published in the capital, as the organs of their respective political parties. As far as language goes, they are certainly high-toned and patriotic. And the fact that such language is used, and expected to interest the public, shows that the corresponding thoughts must exist in the minds of the people, although one is sometimes tempted to think hard things. Educated South Americans are exceedingly sentimental as well as exceedingly impractical—close and analytical thinkers, yet quite impossible as administrators to carry out their own laws.









## A RAILWAY IN THE MAKING

---

In line construction—as far as possible—the track is laid out in the open prairie, making detours whenever necessary to escape the expense of long forest cuttings. But sometimes the lay of the country leaves no alternative. So the pioneers have to chop down huge trees, clear away the trunks and branches, and dig out the stumps and roots, or cover them over to form an embankment—quite an arduous undertaking, which takes some time. Then the growth of vegetation is so persistent that periodical attention must be given to prevent the forest claiming its own again. In some parts of tropic America, railway people spray the weeds and shrubs with a jet from a passing engine, charged with a strong solution of some poisonous chemical, so as to obviate the necessity of hand labour. Of course this method would be impracticable in country used for stock raising. The peons shown here at work in the cutting are all Paraguayans. Italians and Spanish had been tried, but these people preferred to get employment in the Argentine, so that the brunt of the labour has fallen upon the sons of the soil. The scene depicted is on the recently completed extension of the Paraguay Central from Pirapo to Villa Encarnacion.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### ACTUALITIES AND POSSIBILITIES OF COMMERCE

[Most of the information referring to the trade of the country has already been given incidentally, interwoven with other matter more interesting to the general reader, in previous chapters devoted to special subjects.]

A GLANCE at the map will show the peculiarly advantageous position of Paraguay in the interchange of the varied products of the temperate and tropical zones of South America. The Rio Paraguay having its source in the equatorial regions of Brazil, navigable for quite large steamers in the greater part of its course, flows from North to South through a region unequalled in fertility, producing almost anything required for the use of man, rubber, timber, gold, sugar-cane, coffee, rice, bananas, oranges, tapioca, &c., in the tropics and sub-tropics ; wheat, maize, linseed, wool, and the produce of the vine, in the temperate zones spreading out from the southern continuation of the great river in the Argentine, with millions upon millions of cattle



everywhere. Yet, so far, the country is entirely in a state of nature. There is neither canal nor irrigation works in the whole area, not a single swamp has been drained, nor a forest cleared for the planting. The number of square miles represented by forest clearings could be pretty well reckoned up upon the fingers of one hand. Not an acre of pasture land has been put under the plough and refined by means of artificial grasses. Half-a-dozen horses and a scoop would reclaim nine-tenths of the lowlands at less cost than the hundredth part of their intrinsic value. At present periodical fires are needed to burn off the surplus vegetation, used by nature to fill up vacant places. The men and women are yet to come who will direct these gigantic forces into productive channels to their own advantage, instead of sitting down and being content with the things which are given spontaneously to the man who is merely content to reap where he has not sown. Read in this light, it is easy to understand the actualities and potentialities of commerce in this country. What has been said of the Rio Paraguay applies equally to the Alto-Parana, except that the course of the latter river is interrupted by the Guayra Falls, the Niagara of South America. Numbers of subsidiary tributaries are navigable to some extent by smaller craft, except the Mondayi, which is obstructed by an impassable cataract,

magnificent from a spectacular point of view, but exasperating for the man who wants a clean water-way for his timber or plantation products.

For the year 1909 the value of imports and exports amounted respectively to the figures of 3,787,951 and 5,136,638 dollars gold, leaving a most satisfactory balance in favour of the country.

This trade was distributed as follows :—

| NATION.               | IMPORTS.  |    | EXPORTS.  |    |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|-----------|----|
|                       | Dols.     |    | Dols.     |    |
| Germany .. ..         | 759,669   | .. | 1,399,907 | .. |
| Argentina .. ..       | 588,688   | .. | 2,547,275 | .. |
| Austria .. ..         | 62,246    | .. | —         | .. |
| Brazil .. ..          | 15,827    | .. | 2,242,240 | .. |
| Spain .. ..           | 185,057   | .. | 101,494   | .. |
| France .. ..          | 243,554   | .. | 44,877    | .. |
| England .. ..         | 1,289,671 | .. | 2,103     | .. |
| Italy .. ..           | 263,554   | .. | —         | .. |
| United States .. ..   | 210,120   | .. | 5,689     | .. |
| Uruguay .. ..         | 46,421    | .. | 710,804   | .. |
| Portugal .. ..        | 5,233     | .. | —         | .. |
| Holland .. ..         | 9,180     | .. | 9,643     | .. |
| Switzerland .. ..     | 3,509     | .. | 12,321    | .. |
| Belgium .. ..         | 77,585    | .. | 73,040    | .. |
| Other Countries .. .. | 27,761    | .. | 5,241     | .. |

With an enterprising agricultural population tobacco would soon take rank as an important article

of trade. Although the quantity coming into market is gathered up from thousands of small cultivators who rarely devote more than a quarter of an acre to this crop, yet the exports for 1910 reached the respectable quantity of 4,711 tons, which was revised and classified by the Government export department in Asuncion. In spite of primitive methods of cultivation and curing, the demand is steadily increasing ; but the people don't take the matter seriously, and look upon their tobacco crop as a source of pocket-money, to be spent as quickly as possible. The Agricultural Bank provides seed and makes advances to people desirous of embarking in this industry.

' *Yerba Mate*,' a spontaneous product of nature, ranks among the first of the Republic's stores of wealth. The annual production is, more or less, 30,000 tons, valued locally at 5,000,000 gold, representing the labour, cost of gathering, conveyance to market, and profits of the people who own the forests where this plant is growing wild in a state of nature. *Timber*, in the log, consisting mostly of cedar and hard woods, is exploited to some extent in a careless, wasteful manner. The market is in the Argentine, the southern portion of which Republic is composed of open plains, without a stick of wood for fencing or building purposes. *The fruit trade*, mostly in the way of oranges, is also assuming considerable dimensions. The Chaco,

although practically an empty country, possesses a store of wealth in the form of vast forests of sandal wood or *Quebracho*. Being very hard and durable, large quantities are exported to the Argentine to be used as fencing posts on the estancias. But the principal value of this wood is the extract, which is used largely in Germany for tanning and other purposes. Several large factories have been erected at various points on the river banks, with small railways stretching away into the woods to convey the logs to the port, where they are reduced to sawdust by powerful machinery, the tannin being expressed by a special process, and then dried for market. These establishments employ thousands of peons, and afford a considerable source of revenue to the owners, some of whom are millionaires and own sufficient land to found a State. The actual business of the country has been outlined briefly in the foregoing pages. What might be done is another matter altogether. A few days' run down the river or by train we have a city of 1,200,000, with quite a number of smaller towns in a comparatively cold climate with a winter sufficiently rigorous to make it impossible to produce certain food crops during those months. It is obvious, then, that there is an enormous opening for 'out of season' fruit and vegetables in the months of May, June, July, August, and September. The





PÉREZ AND SANJURJO,  
IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, ASUNCION.



principal of these are tomatoes, Chinese peppers, water melons, green cobs of maize, peas, English potatoes, yams, cabbages, &c., also an opening for grapes, if grown in suitable localities ; it being remembered that the Argentine is largely a country without fruit—owing partly to the scarcity of small-holders—as also to attention being concentrated on a few staple industries, as wheat, maize, wool, and beef production. In Paraguay the introduction of practical colonists with a little capital and some improvement in the way of access to markets will settle all things. The *imports* consist largely of cotton goods, sugar, kerosene, salt, hardware, clothing material, flour, and the other odds and ends which are required in ordinary civilized life. A direct trade with Europe or North America would put matters on quite a different footing. This would necessitate the erection of warehouses for storage purposes in the free zone, in either Monte Video or Buenos Ayres, in order to pass everything in transit and avoid the ordinary blackmail and needless expenses incidental to transshipment of goods in those ports. The export of hides is, of course, one of the principal sources of revenue.

The leading commercial houses are Spanish, German, and Italian ; English, North American, and French being conspicuous by their absence. Why this should be so, it is hard to say. It is not that there are

not enough merchants to fill up the blanks. We can only put it down to ignorance and lack of enterprise. In spite of the fluctuating value of the paper currency—indeed to some extent because of it—these firms are in a sound position, doing good business, and honourably complying with their obligations. Cases of insolvency are almost unheard of in the whole country. The same thing may be said of the banking institutions. So remunerative is their business that they give seven to nine per cent. interest on fixed deposits. This would elsewhere be considered an indication of an unsafe or speculative investment upon the part of such financial institutions. Here, on the contrary, it simply means that there is not enough money in circulation to conduct the business of the country. The paper money which has not yet been converted amounts to only 32,200,000 ; that is, about 35 dollars per head of population. Could anything be more absurd? What must we think of the industries which enable the borrower to obtain a surplus after paying the banks twelve per cent. for a loan? On the other hand, it is easy to imagine the results which might be obtained in the way of business if money was obtainable at three or four per cent., as in most countries. There are lean years and fat years, of course ; but, judging from the number of fine villas going up in the outskirts of the capital,



the fat years must be the rule rather than the exception. As an indication of the state of affairs in the capital, tram fares appear to run to about fourpence per mile. Think of it, ye shareholders in tramways in Buenos Ayres or New York ! Dear money is one of the most important factors in delaying the progress of this fine country. The fact that banks can afford to give nine per cent. interest on fixed deposits, and pay dividends of from eleven to thirteen per cent., speaks for itself. And every one knows that they are extremely safe, and do business upon a sound basis, so that most people with means prefer to live upon the interest of their money rather than tie it up in any new enterprise requiring their personal supervision. Who can blame them ?



## CHAPTER XXXII

### GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

As may be seen by a glance at the map, Paraguay is the Mesopotamia of South America, being shut in on every side by large rivers, excepting a short distance between the upper waters of the Rio Apa and the Guayra Falls. A reliable survey of the territory has yet to be made. On ordinary maps one sees ranges of mountains and lakes where none exist. According to the easy-going institutions of this land of sunshine, many enterprising surveyors get their information as to the contour of the country at the nearest Gauchos rancho, working out the details in comfort in a cosy armchair in their own office. As a consequence, most people, on taking possession of their properties, generally have a new survey of the land for their own security, sometimes finding less than the quantity indicated in their documents or, it just as frequently occurs, that they are richer than they imagined by finding themselves the happy owners of some score of square

miles more than they were entitled to by right of purchase. The eastern portion of the Republic may be considered an extension of the Highlands of Brazil, a region mostly covered with primaeval forest, at all events, to the north of Villa Encarnacion. The Parana, taking its rise in the heart of Brazil, has cut out a deep gorge through this district on its course to the sea, taking a leap over the hills on its way that throws the Niagara into insignificance. The possibilities of this phenomenon of nature in the way of electrical power can easily be imagined by the expert in matters of motive power. Owing to the shortness of their courses, and the nature of the country, the tributary streams of the Alto-Parana are not navigable to any extent, being generally small, and obstructed by rapids. There is indeed a certain amount of rafting and barge work on the upper part of the Mondayi. But the lower reaches of this river form a magnificent cataract, much more imposing and beautiful than the far-famed Iguassu, a few leagues away on the other side of the Parana. Beyond a little exploitation of timber and yerba, colonization has not yet begun in this region. The completion of the through railway from Posadas to Buenos Ayres will give an impetus to the development of these waste lands. A few wild Indians, generally simple, harmless creatures, roam the forest, eking out a precarious living by the gathering of

wild fruits and the proceeds of the chase. A Jesuit mission—of German origin—has just started a settlement on the Mondayi, with a view to civilizing these poor denizens of the forest. A little higher up, at Santa Teresa, on a tributary of the same river, a Scottish Mission Society is also at work, with the same end in view. In some parts, in the north, as just west of Tacurupucu, there are lovely prairie lands, sometimes consisting of natural paddocks of a few acres in the midst of the woods. In other places they form quite large estancias of the extent of ten or twenty square leagues. West of the watershed, the country rapidly drops down towards the Rio Paraguay to an elevation only a few hundred feet above sea-level. Almost the entire area consists of a wavy succession of round ridges, or 'lomas' as they are called, covered with dense forest, in contrast to the intermediate depressions, which are invariably pasture land, often indeed somewhat damp during the rains, but rarely degenerating into positive swamp land. In fact, there is hardly a swamp in the whole Republic which could not be drained at nominal cost. On this side of the country, we find the bulk of the population, particularly in the south. Many of the rivers, as the Apa, the Aquidaban, the Ipane, the Jejui, the Manduvira, the Tebicuary, &c., are more or less susceptible to navigation, and are already most of them used to some





PALM FOREST IN THE CHACO.



extent for the rafting of timber, or the conveyance of yerba. Lake Ipacaray has a beautiful watering-place at the little town of San Bernardino, much patronized by rich Argentines, and sufferers from lung diseases who desire to escape the severities of winter in their own cities of the south. A number of Germans have been established in this district for many years, engaged in dairying, mixed farming, cattle-breeding, and, in a few favoured localities, growing coffee. In Paraguay proper the chief towns are Asuncion, the capital, with 80,000 inhabitants. Villa Del Pilar, in the south, with a population of town and municipal district, 7,247. Paraguari, town and neighbourhood, 7,373. Villa Rica, in the centre of the country, in what is considered the sanatorium of the River Plate, town and district, 28,755. Villa Encarnacion, terminus of the central Paraguayan Railway, 1,526. Villa Concepcion, on the Alto-Paraguay, 15,683; a rising town which is the emporium for the mate trade in the north of Paraguay and the neighbouring districts of Brazil. The other towns—as yet—are merely a nucleus of a few general stores and a police station, handling the trade of sparsely populated districts, which still remain to be opened up to closer settlement. In fact, nine-tenths of the peasantry are settled within a radius of thirty miles from the existing railway line, the great bulk of them being clustered



between Caazapa, in the centre, down to the Rio Paraguay. In the south—Misiones—cattle-raising is the principal business, as also in the north in the Concepcion district, if one excepts the thousands of peons who are engaged in the gathering of yerba and the lumber business. The whole of the Republic possesses an area of something like one and a half times the size of Great Britain, with a population variously estimated at from 600,000 to 800,000 people.

The Paraguayan Chaco—on the western side of the Rio Paraguay—is a striking contrast in every way; generally low and swampy on the banks of the river, with extensive lagoons and backwaters, the home of millions of alligators and unknown amphibious creatures, providing in the open places excellent pasturage on the flooded lands, but often requiring the utmost care to prevent the loss of one's whole amount of stock during periodical inundations, which extend for fifty miles inland from the great river. The drier lands of the interior are subject to drought, and require something to be done in most cases in the way of water conservation. The soil is mixed with a proportion of mineral salts in most places, and unsuitable for cultivation, except in parts which are eminently suited for cotton growing, where the dryness of the climate renders it possible to harvest the crop without constant loss of the almost daily rains in



Paraguay, east of the river. Large areas are covered with Quebracho forests, generally with an impenetrable undergrowth of cactus and euphorbias. Then again most of the plains are dotted, as far as the eye can reach, with lovely palms, known locally as 'Palmares.' The climate is hot and dry, except in the vicinity of the river, where a damp and humid climate characterizes most of the year. Myriads of mosquitoes and sandflies pester the animal life of those riverside districts. A few estancias are established in the vicinity of the river ; and the stock do splendidly if looked after and saved from possible inundations. The Indians are few in number—of more or less nomadic habits, doing a little primitive cultivation at times, and possessing a few horses and sheep. The South American Mission Society have been at work amongst them for many years—without any marked degree of success, although a few have settled down to a quiet life. The seed sown by the missionaries may fructify in time, but the nature of the country makes it difficult to offer inducement to the hunter and nomad to settle down to the monotony of domestic life on land which hardly offers him a subsistence as the reward of his labour. Indirectly the mission people have done a great work in the pacification of wild tribes, who now offer no resistance to people embarking in pastoral or timber-getting industries. In the north,

towards the Bolivian border, the country improves very much. But, up to date, little is known of many parts of the Chaco—merely sufficient to generalize. As far as one can see, there is a future for sugar and cotton on parts of the river banks and, possibly, the north; in the centre and west, stock-breeding and the Quebracho business. The railway in course of construction from Formosa to Bolivia will open up part of the region to civilization, as also will the projected canalization of the River Pilcomayo, if realized. People interested in the Chaco might read up Mr. Barbroke Grubb's *Unknown Land*, a record of twenty years of mission work in Central South America.









## SETTLER'S COTTAGE

---

This view represents the homestead of a German colonist in the land of oranges. Evidently the hardships of the backwoods have not troubled him very much. The sons of the Fatherland may be found scattered all over Paraguay on farms, estancias, or in business. Coming of a hardy stock, which has yet not had time to degenerate under the deteriorating influences of inherited wealth, they are mostly doing well, even at the worst making a better living than falls to the lot of their class in old Europe. In Brazil it is estimated that there are at least 250,000 in the Southern Provinces alone. In the Argentine their landed properties cover quite a big area of the Republic. The fact of a number of their schools being subsidized by the German Government is very suggestive, as showing a perfectly right and justifiable desire to retain their children in the nationality of their fathers. The political results of such a policy may yet astonish the world. In this matter Great Britain might take a leaf out of her book instead of leaving her sons and daughters to be assimilated by foreign nations and in a few generations even forgetting their mother tongue. Even on the meanest commercial grounds it is bad business. Every British resident abroad acts as a living advertisement for the wares of his country, and, indirectly helps to find employment for a number of his brethren at home. In many cases he also returns to his native land to spend an income which is derived from property acquired by his industry in the land of his adoption.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### GOVERNMENT COLONIES

ACCORDING to the laws of colonization, each agricultural family or individual settler coming into the country is entitled to sixteen squares of land upon arrival. After a certain period of residence, and the completion of a moderate amount of improvements, another sixteen squares are allotted to each holder. The square, as an area of measurement, represents a hundred varas each way—about an acre and three-quarters. Some of the older colonies, such as Villa Hays in the Chaco, on the opposite side of the river near Asuncion, San Bernardino, on Lake Ipacaray, and Colonia Gonzalez, some twenty leagues beyond Villa Rica, have been filled up long ago. Many of the original settlers are now well off. Indeed, a number of them are quite rich, although some are now settled in other parts of the country, and occupied in other business, to which their early training had better adapted them. Most of the Germans have been

successful one way and another. Very few of the French settlers now remain in the country, having been all city people and, therefore, unsuitable for rude pioneering. The Italians have located themselves in or near the great towns as mechanics, market gardeners, or small tradespeople, who, being hard-working and economical, have also secured a good footing in the country. The same thing may be said of the Spanish, who, of late years, have been coming along in considerable numbers. Foreigners of other nationalities and North Americans are few in number. The British subjects in Paraguay number several hundreds, mostly well-established and not inclined to exchange their position for the uncertainties of life in another country; the exodus, which continued for some time after the failure of New Australia and Cosme as social experiments, having ceased long ago, and a small but increasing influx of new-comers, and the intermarriages of the children of the early settlers, are building up the community into a state of permanence and stability. The majority of these people are settled on the land or on estancias, as also a few in trade, or in the railway service. By the curious irony of fate, some of the original settlers who left the country in disgust have since returned to Paraguay, and a number are said to have the desire to do so, but are not able to raise the necessary cash to pay their way.

*Colonia Hohenhau.*—In point of population Colonia Hohenhau takes the lead—with a total number of 638 inhabitants, consisting of 138 families classified as follows: Germans 55, Argentines 60, Brazilians of German descent 358, Austrians 13, Chilenos 1, Italians 12, Paraguayans 131, Russians 2, Swiss 5. This colony is well situated a few leagues above Villa Encarnacion on the Parana, but suffers from the disadvantage of consisting of continuous forest. However, the Germans from Brazil were born to this manner of life and do not mind it. Up to their own simple standard of living, they are doing well, but, unfortunately, have not the remotest idea of labour-saving appliances or the most up-to-date methods of making their labour effective in the ordinary operations of pioneering in a wooded country. Their crops consist mostly of maize, mandioca, and sugarcane, with a good beginning in the way of yerba plantations. Passing over to the Rio Paraguay, the first colony on that side is :

*Colonia Gaboto*, in the department of Villa Franca. Unfortunately, these lands are subject to inundation during the periodical floods and suffering from the consequent drawbacks. The inhabitants are mostly Paraguayans, with a small German element of twenty-eight persons. Further up the river, in the department of Villa Rosario, we find :



*Colonia Tinacria*.—Good land with plenty of timber, but, unfortunately, rather remote from a market for the limited quantities of the small producer. At present there are only fifty-one Europeans living there, the remaining 734 being natives of the country, cultivating tobacco, sugar-cane, maize, and mandioca.

*Colonia Elisa*, in the department of San Antonio, three leagues from Asuncion, was a small private colony, now consisting of eighteen families, all doing well in the export of bananas, mandarins, &c ; also in the production of Alfalfa and pineapples.

*Colonia 25 de Novembre* is situated in the department of Ajos, on part of the lands which were originally granted to the New Australia Association. They have first-rate grazing land and equally good forest for timber and agriculture. This is a Paraguayan Colony pure and simple, cultivating the staple foods and revenue crops of the country. The population amounts to about 5,000 persons, with 4,000 head of cattle and some five or six hundred mules and horses. The progress of this colony, which was only founded in 1893, shows that the sons of the soil at last appreciate the advantages of freehold property of their very own rather than squatting upon the estates of the big land-holders without any security of tenure. Such personal ownership of small areas of land is the basis

of all civilization, giving an incentive to the individual to make improvements for his own benefit and that of his children after him ; as also fostering the love of the land for the sake of past associations. State ownership should never interfere with private property in land up to the point of use and occupation by the labour of the family ; unless, indeed, the population became so dense that a further sub-division became necessary. Divorce man from the land, and patriotism, combined with the self-abnegation of the individual for the benefit of posterity, will to a large extent disappear. Intense culture of small areas has been proved in many countries to give the best economic results, even without the advantages of possible co-operation in the possession of expensive machinery, irrigation works, &c. Compulsory co-operation must always fail in competition with personal effort, on account of the lack of interest and enthusiasm incidental to carrying out other people's plans even if really more effective than one's own personal efforts, however crude.

*Colonia Cosme*, in the Ca-azapa district, on the River Pirapo, is the home of the last of the few enthusiastic communists who followed William Lane to Paraguay. The village is situated about three leagues from the railway at Maciel. Some two years ago—in despair of realizing their ideals of sharing alike



OTTO ZINNERT'S GUNSHOP, ASUNCION.





in labour and production, seeing their numbers gradually dwindle away through the exodus of members who were disillusioned by the actualities of life in a communistic settlement—the small remnant liquidated the concern and started on individualistic lines. These people are fairly well off, and appear to be contented with their lot. They have a saw-mill, sugar-making appliances, and no end of marketable timber—also a few cattle. The population is about fifty, including women and children. There are a few Paraguayan settlers.

*Colonia Nueva Germania* is situated at San Pedro, near the Rio Paraguay, on the way up to Villa Concepcion. No more lands are now available. Some have done well out of yerba cultivation. It is estimated that 500,000 plants are set out in that settlement, also some coffee, oranges, bananas, &c., with a couple of thousand head of cattle. The population consists of 81 Germans and 180 Paraguayans of all ages.

*New Australia* is situated in the Ajos district—about eleven leagues from the railway; the first settlement of the British communists, whose history is related more fully in another chapter. It consists of some seven square leagues of rich forest and valuable pasture land. The agricultural possibilities of the country have not as yet been developed in any way. The people who remained after the liquidation of the

Association were either content to sit down and let their cattle breed up and give them an easy living, while they gave them a look up, and some possible attention in the way of doctoring accidental wounds once a week ; or else have gone into business running general stores for the native trade. Of late years a few of them are doing good work with a fine sawmill. These people are all now as well off and comfortable as they like to make themselves, which is not bad, seeing that most started with little or no capital. There are already some four or five thousand cattle, and a probable thousand head of horses. There is no cultivation from a commercial point of view. Most families do not trouble to grow even their own food-stuffs, even if the colony is somewhat remote from the line. Yet there is a local market for maize, treacle, pigs, &c., at remunerative prices, if handled on up-to-date principles, also untold possibilities in the way of tobacco-growing. The soil of the newly cleared virgin forest is immensely rich and will produce anything, it being, of course, essential that the settler should be practical in the best methods of bringing wooded lands under cultivation, if he expects to get the best results. In this colony some four leagues of prairie land are reserved for pasturage for the stock of the colonists, who are entitled to run a hundred head of cattle on the commons free, after that paying

a small sum on each animal over that number to be devoted to the payment of their officials. Owing to a preferential arrangement made in the early days of the Association, settlers are entitled to sixty squares of land for each family. A public school has been established in the midst of the colony, with an English clergyman as head teacher, and service is held at a central point once a week. These settlers have never been molested in any way during political disturbances amongst the people of the country. In some cases, unprotected women and children have lived for years in isolated spots in the district in perfect safety. If the foreigner gets into trouble in Paraguay, it is generally because he goes out of his way to look for it. The total number of British in the colony is about seventy persons. No colonists have left the settlement for a considerable period, and a few people are coming in to fill up vacancies.

*Nueva Italia* is well situated on the Rio Paraguay, just below the capital between Lambare and Angostura. From thence it stretches eastwards towards the Laguna Ipoa. It consists of an area of some 30,000 acres, with a commonage for the free grazing of the live stock belonging to the colonists. The land is high, and well beyond the reach of inundations—with a pleasant breezy climate. There are numbers of old orange groves, dating from the olden time. The soil



is somewhat light and sandy, peculiarly suited for the cultivation of mandarins, for which there will be an excellent market on account of the facilities for export by the river, the demand in the Argentine being practically unlimited. Tomatoes and Chinese peppers are also extremely profitable crops, to supply Buenos Ayres, Rosario, &c., with out-of-season vegetables. Where the soil is suitable, the same thing may be said of bananas, tobacco, pineapples, limes, &c. Some 120 persons of European descent are settled on this colony, mostly Germans and Danes. Colonists are granted free sixteen squares for each settler or family, with the option of purchasing another similar area for 20 dollars gold after a certain period of residence, and the requisite improvements are placed on the land.

In conclusion, I must warn intending settlers of certain mistakes they are liable to make by regarding the information supplied by irresponsible and inexperienced people as being reliable and safe to act upon.

In the first place, they will be advised to plant cotton. It is true that cotton produces well in the country; but the fatal objection from the point of view of financial returns—if cultivated upon a large scale—is that there is so much rain during the picking season that at least half the crop will be lost during



any average year, also that the best prices are unremunerative in any case—unless the planter has his own ginning apparatus and did his own exporting.

Secondarily, people are often counselled to establish coffee plantations. Unfortunately, except in a few favoured localities, the crops are invariably damaged by frost, also there is not sufficient altitude. Having been engaged in agricultural operations for fifteen years in the country, the author is entitled to speak with some degree of authority on the subject, but can accept no responsibility for the failures of people who adopt methods other than those dictated by his own personal experience, and fully described in the pages of this book.

Thirdly, the fact is once more emphasized that if the agriculturalist expects to obtain satisfactory commercial results from the land in a climate where the growth of vegetation is rank and continuous, he must learn the use of some simple labour-saving implements for destroying the weeds, and loosening the surface soil, so as to take advantage of the never-resting forces of nature—rather than permit the elements to get the upper hand—and work against the human race, who are told to occupy the earth and subdue it. As already described, by a little timely attention in large plantations, these results are easily

secured by colonial and North American methods of horse cultivation. In smaller plots, such as market gardens, &c., the wheel hoe, which is invaluable for use in narrow rows—where a horse cannot walk—suffices for all forms of intense cultivation for small-holders.









## A PLANTATION OF SUGAR-CANE

---

Cane-cutting provides an occupation for a large number of peons for several months, during the crushing season. The cane grows up something like the bamboo in appearance, but thicker in proportion, and much shorter. Some varieties do indeed reach a height of twenty feet, but nine or ten is a good average, even on new forest land. The original cutting stools out into ten or a dozen plants, which, once started, grow rapidly, and are fit for crushing at the end of a year. In the process of cutting, the top crown of leaves must be lopped off, and the stem stripped of dead leafage with a machete. The stalks are then carted to the factory, where the juice is extracted by crushing between powerful rollers, and finally crystallized by boiling and various chemical processes. The peons are mostly recruited locally, and, like most day-labourers all the world over, are reckless and improvident with their earnings. Sometimes their wives and children accompany them to the harvest and pass the time as best they can in some rough shelter. Some of the peasants have their own little patches of cane, which they crush in a home-made wooden mill, which they call a 'Trapiche.' The juice is then boiled down to the state of treacle, and mostly used for the purpose of making 'Cana' or native rum. This business of converting good food into bad liquor is more profitable than wise. However, these people are no worse in these matters than others who should know better.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### UNKNOWN ANIMALS IN PARAGUAY AND THE CHACO

THE fauna of the country is fairly well described in any ordinary treatise on Natural History. The details are outside the scope of this work. Much information on the subject is given incidentally in other chapters. But it is assumed that the average reader is looking for information which is not contained in the voluminous text-books devoted to science. Careful and systematic investigation, continued for a number of years, would no doubt result in the discovery of many creatures which remain still to be classified. Owing to the distinct dividing line between forest and plain, and the peculiar distribution of 'island forests,' there is a tendency for certain species to become localized—for the simple reason that such animals and birds will not venture out from their shelter to cross the open space leading over to the nearest part of an adjoining wood. This fact is well known to all backwoodsmen. When one comes down

to the study of reptiles and insects the difficulties are obvious. A life-time might be spent in collecting without exhausting the list of creatures which have a fashion of putting in an appearance just when one fancies he is well posted on the subject. The alternations of wood and prairie and conformation of the country also tend to grade off different varieties, even in the case of the larger animals.

Take the alligator, for example. We find a dumpy little fellow a yard long, sometimes hiding away in the springs, whence people draw their drinking-water, developing into the eight or ten foot saurian, to be seen in his thousands in the waters of the Rio Paraguay or the Parana.

The natural history of Central South America is less known than that of Central Africa. When one considers the sparsity of the population and the enormous areas of dense forests affording a secure retreat for the fauna of the country, the thing is easily comprehensible. As a case in point, the writer passed ten consecutive years in one district, observing in a casual way the forms of animal life commonly in evidence. It might have been expected that in a year or two one would have exhausted the list of creatures making use of that habitat. On the contrary new varieties and species, some even unknown to the natives of the district, were always turning up quite

unexpectedly. If this is the case in a thickly populated, old, settled part of the country, what must be expected in the wilderness of forest and backwaters of the great rivers and swamps, where there are no people except a few Indians, and when the naturalist must be extremely enthusiastic to endure the discomforts and physical hardship incidental to years of life spent in such places in the search for rare and shy animals which are seldom seen by man?

Perhaps the most celebrated of these creatures is the 'Mboya Jagwa,' or dog-snake, a huge water serpent which is said to attain a length of twenty or thirty metres. So far, this monster is unknown to science. I know one white man who discovered a huge skeleton on the banks of a riacho in the Chaco; unfortunately, he did not realize the value of his find, and took no steps to preserve this interesting trophy. The Indians describe the creature as having a head like a dog and as carrying that similarity still further by yelping like a puppy. The extremity of the tail is hooked in order to enable it to hold its prey more securely. I have heard the story of an Indian who was attacked by one in crossing the little river in the Caaguassu district. The serpent swam swiftly towards the frightened man, and swirling in the water, attempted to envelop his victim in the coils of his tail. The old man escaped this fate only





CABRERA, BENITEZ, AND CO.,  
GENERAL IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS, VILLA CONCEPCION, ALTO-PARAGUAY.



by diving and escaping to the shore. This creature is said to exist in the great Laguna Ibera in Corrientes, in parts of Paraguay, and the riachos of the Chaco.

All the Indians, Paraguayans, and Correntinos of the north vouch for its existence—and agree down to the smallest details in their descriptions of the creatures and their habits. I have known an Indian village to be moved to another part of the country on account of the terror inspired by a 'Mboya Jagwa,' which had taken up its abode at the river crossing in front of their toldos. The writer has not felt sufficiently enthusiastic over the collecting mania to hunt the creature up systematically, and never had the good fortune to come across one casually.

In the great forest from Caaguassu to San Joaquin, the Indians assert that there is to be found a large black tree-climbing animal of which they are very much afraid, and, to my personal knowledge, will not go near its haunts if they can help it. This may be a black panther, which is sometimes found on the Alto-Parana. But as the Indians are not afraid of the really formidable jaguar in the day time, there seems to be some considerable doubt as to the identity of the creature.

Further north, in Brazil, they speak of the 'Ow-Ow,' a white, long-haired animal about the size of a sheep—which hunts in packs, and attacks human

beings. This story may or may not prove to be a myth, but the widespread testimony in favour of its existence must have some basis in actual fact.

The reports of a spotted deer or antelope, in Matto Grosso, seem rather more probable. As every one knows, the young of the ordinary deer is always spotted, but changes its colour in the process of growing up. The original progenitor that handed down these characteristics may very possibly still be found in Central South America, as also in some parts of the East Indies.

In the Cordilleras, stretching from Villa Rica to the Rio Parana, the Indians describe a probably extinct monster called the Teju-Jagua (Iguana Dog)—a creature with the head and tail of an alligator and the body of a dog. These people never had access to works on geology, so could not know that they were giving a fairly accurate description of the Dinosaurus, which existed in Colorado and Nebraska in immense numbers during other geological periods. If the animal is really extinct—although all sorts of things might be found in the forest-clad hills of this range of mountains—it is evident that the tradition has been carried down from father to son—from a period during which the creature actually did exist. The common people also believe in the absurd myth of a huge dragon being chained up in a cavern up



there. The credulity of ignorant people of this class is only equalled by their lack of faith in the actualities of life.

In North Central Paraguay, I have heard the peasantry speak of a bird with phosphorescent feathers to be found in the forests. The story sounds absurd. Yet three years ago an account was published in the English newspapers to the effect that two birds with luminous feathers were observed by some country people flying overhead at night. How do such stories originate?

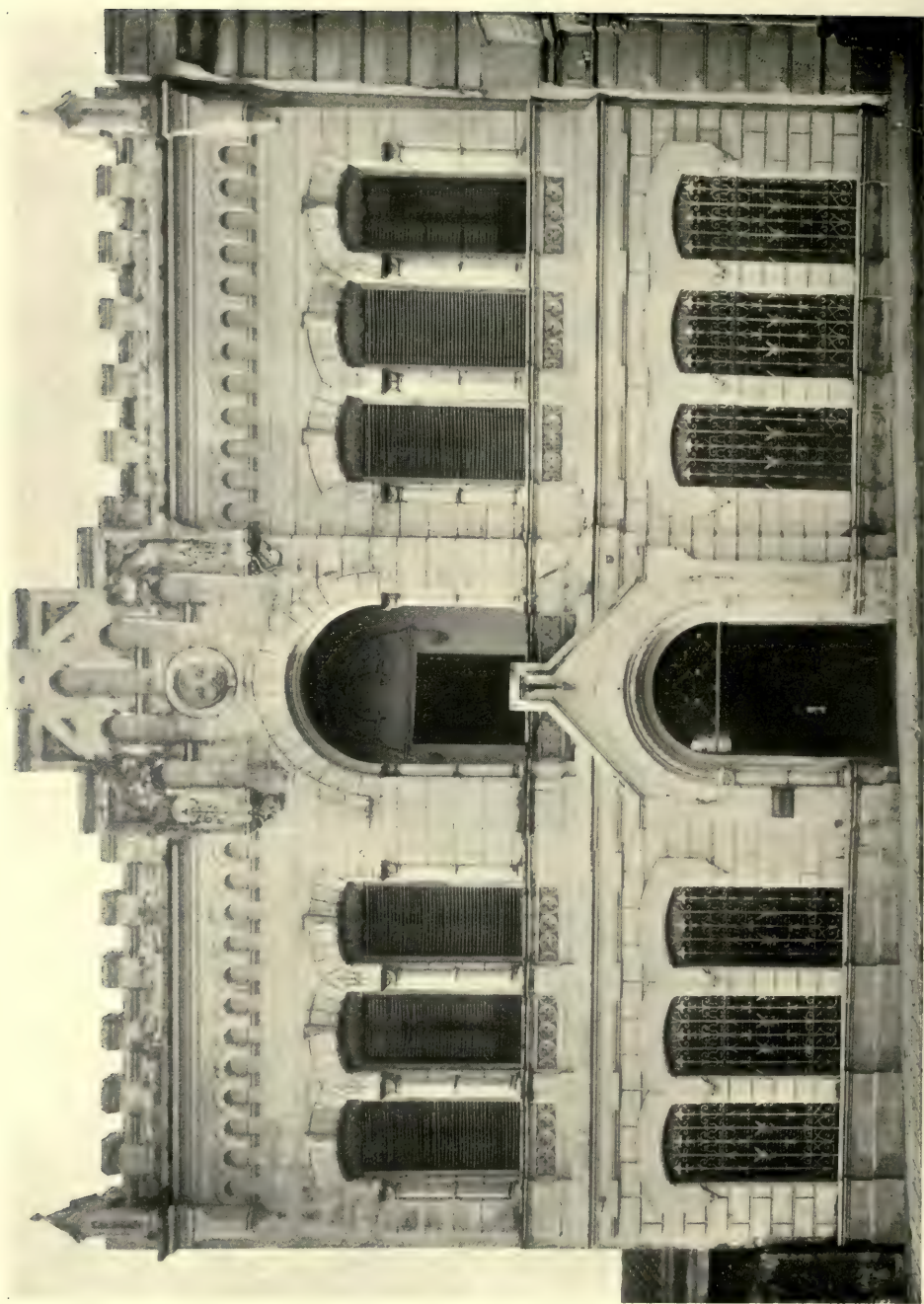
The 'Curiju,' or ordinary boa, is not uncommon in the coastal districts of the Rio Paraguay and its tributaries, attaining sometimes to an enormous length. In the way of local natural history one of the strangest things which all Paraguayans and Indians insist upon as being an absolute fact is that the great Ant Bear is bi-sexual. Of course, the idea is hardly admissible. But, strange to say, although the writer has shot five or six to his own bag and has made careful inquiries of other Europeans, he is not able to find any one who has ever come across a male of this species of animal. Since hearing the above, I have not had the opportunity to dissect a specimen, but I have shot a wolf without any external evidence of sex.

Enough has been said to show the aspiring young

naturalist that discoveries of more or less importance will reward the man who makes a careful survey of the area. The possibilities will be realized when I say that not one in a hundred of the inhabitants of the country have ever set eyes on even the larger animals of the district—except after they have been killed by the hunter—so shy and retiring are these creatures in the shelter of their forest fastnesses. Under such circumstances, it is evident many animals have escaped observation.











## CENTRAL OFFICES OF THE 'INDUSTRIAL PARAGUAYA'

---

The possibilities of this colossal enterprise appeal to one's imagination. In the North-east of the Republic they own a territory of 1,140 square leagues, mostly consisting of very fine forest lands, but including a lot of equally good pastoral country. The 'Yerba' or Paraguayan tea—growing spontaneously in the woods—gives an output of 5,000 tons per annum, which is prepared for the market and put up in special packets for the consumer in the company's own mills in Asuncion, Corrientes, and Buenos Ayres. A beginning has also been made with artificial plantations of Yerba. The sequence of ideas on the subject of 'mate' drinking is rather amusing. In South America—amongst the richer classes—there is a growing tendency to regard the habit as not being quite genteel, and such people are beginning to use tea and coffee as a substitute for the national beverage; while in Europe and North America, the tonic properties of 'mate' are being recognized by physicians, and prescribed for cases of dyspepsia arising from the deleterious effects of an excessive use of tea. The irrepressible Kaiser is also trying to introduce the habit as a 'pick-me-up' and corrective amongst the beer-loving soldiery of the Fatherland.



## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE VERY LATEST

To publish a book with all information quite up-to-date is not an easy matter, when conditions are constantly changing. In a new country this mostly means progress. In Paraguay the author, by contrasting the state of the country fifteen years ago with the actual position at present, finds a very decided betterment in the standard of living of the lower and middle classes. Apart from this satisfactory improvement in material welfare, one observes a marked and appreciative comprehension of the reform ideas of the twentieth century filtering through the minds of the cultured townspeople down to the simple 'campesino' in his rancho in the backwoods. Such ideas have not taken a very practical form as yet. But right thinking must eventually be expressed in right action. There may be a certain amount of backsliding, but gradual progress is assured. And it is only by looking backwards that it is possible to see how far we have made good.

Direct railway communication having been now opened up with Buenos Ayres, the competition with the oldtime river traffic is certain to revolutionize the trade relations of the country, and to result in the development of new industries.

A railway from a suitable spot on the Parana through the centre of the Republic to the Matto Grosso frontier would open up very fine country to the possibilities of closer settlement and provide a remedy for the inconvenience and expense of transshipping goods at Angostura when the river is low. Trans-Paraguayan Railways are by no means essential for the export of natural products, because a number of small rivers are available for rafts and flat-bottomed craft. The finest country on the watershed has none of these advantages. It appears to be pretty certain that the Central Paraguayan Railway Company will construct a branch from the Villa Rica district to the mouth of the Rio Mondayi so as to connect with the Brazilian Atlantic line to the Iguazu Falls. This projected extension will pass through almost continuous forest, with some yerba and no end of very fine timber. But the district has no population up to date ; that is, if one excepts the few wandering Guajaki Indians, who hide away like wild animals in the depth of the forests, and a few toldos of the agricultural Canguah tribes. At present, agricultural colonization

is somewhat restricted in Paraguay—mostly on account of ignorance of opportunities. This is just as well for the time being, because in case of the sudden influx of a large number of people there are not sufficient lands available for the purpose, except in the very fine Government Colony of 'Nueva Italia' between Lambare and Angostura, on the river, or in Colonia Nueva Australia. This statement seems incredible, yet it is an absolute fact. The few lots which have not been alienated in other Government Colonies are either too remote from a market or liable to periodical inundations—as in the case of Colonia Gaboto on the River Paraguay. It is true that sugar planting might give a fortune—at local prices (about 200 dollars gold per ton), at quite remote distances from any line of communication. But this industry is beyond the reach of an individual settler, when there is no factory to buy his cane at a fair price. About fifteen hundred tons of sugar are imported annually : so much for local enterprise in one of the finest cane-growing districts on earth. It may be said, why cannot the small settler buy his land in a suitable locality ? He may, indeed, by a lucky hit, find a location, if he has friends to show him around ; but otherwise the chances are all against him. Small holdings of native pobladores generally consist of a couple or three hectares, with no legalized title, other than the



system of tenure known as squatters' rights. These microscopic establishments are of no use to the European, and the improvements worse than useless. On the other hand, the bulk of the lands are held by large owners, often absentees, who know nothing of their properties—in lots of twenty, a hundred, and even, in one case, twelve hundred square leagues of territory. Very few of these people have been enterprising enough to cut up their land in small lots, and develop their interests by means of small settlers. The consequence is that as all of these speculators are waiting for something to turn up, there is no possibility of that something turning up until some of them get a move on. When the spontaneous products of nature are exhausted, perhaps the pressure of population will solve the problem. The present Government have already taken important steps towards the encouragement of foreign immigration. Up to the present they have always provided land for incoming settlers—and no doubt will extend operations and persevere in this laudable effort to open up their very fine country by the purchase of suitable lands along the railway for the purposes of settlement.

About a thousand Europeans, including women and children, are settled on the public lands in Paraguay, practically all of whom—having learnt their agricultural methods in the country—are laboriously

cultivating a couple of hectareas in native style with the machete and hoe. These people, working by such crude methods, would have starved in any other part of the world. A very few practical agriculturalists, who understood their business, have done well. Others are prospering in commercial pursuits—or in the timber trade; while yet again, some, who have had exceptional opportunities, have made quite a good thing out of cattle. Camps are going up in price. People ask four, five, six, and, along the railway, even up to ten thousand dollars gold per league, for what could have been obtained, a few years ago, for as many dollars in paper currency. No doubt the cattle business in outside country all the world over is on the move. Even here in Paraguay—in spite of the prophecies of pessimists—prices have been steadily going up during the past two decades. A wretched criollo novillo—which dresses at 200 kilos when clean—fetches in the market from twenty-five to thirty dollars gold. Fairly decent herds of mixed cattle of the country fetch about twelve dollars gold per head. Dr. Kemmerich, the 'La Fonciere' Company, and others have gone in for stock in a fairly large way—counting their animals up to six figures. This business offers unlimited scope to the man who is intelligent and energetic enough to refine his camps and to improve the type of his breeding animals. Herefords

have already been proved to be a success. Not only are the camp lands susceptible of enormous improvement, but large areas of forest in the north and north-east have as undergrowth an impenetrable jungle of cane, known locally as Tacuarembo and Tacuapi. The leaves of these plants are excellent forage for horses and cattle, and any animal may get a feed by turning in his own length. Cunning old bullocks hide away all the winter in these forests, and come out in the spring as fat as mud. Of course, to do anything in this way necessitates small paddocks—of twenty or thirty hectareas—or there would be no finding the animals when wanted; also calves and young cattle would have to be pastured in the open—or they would otherwise be scoffed up by jaguars.

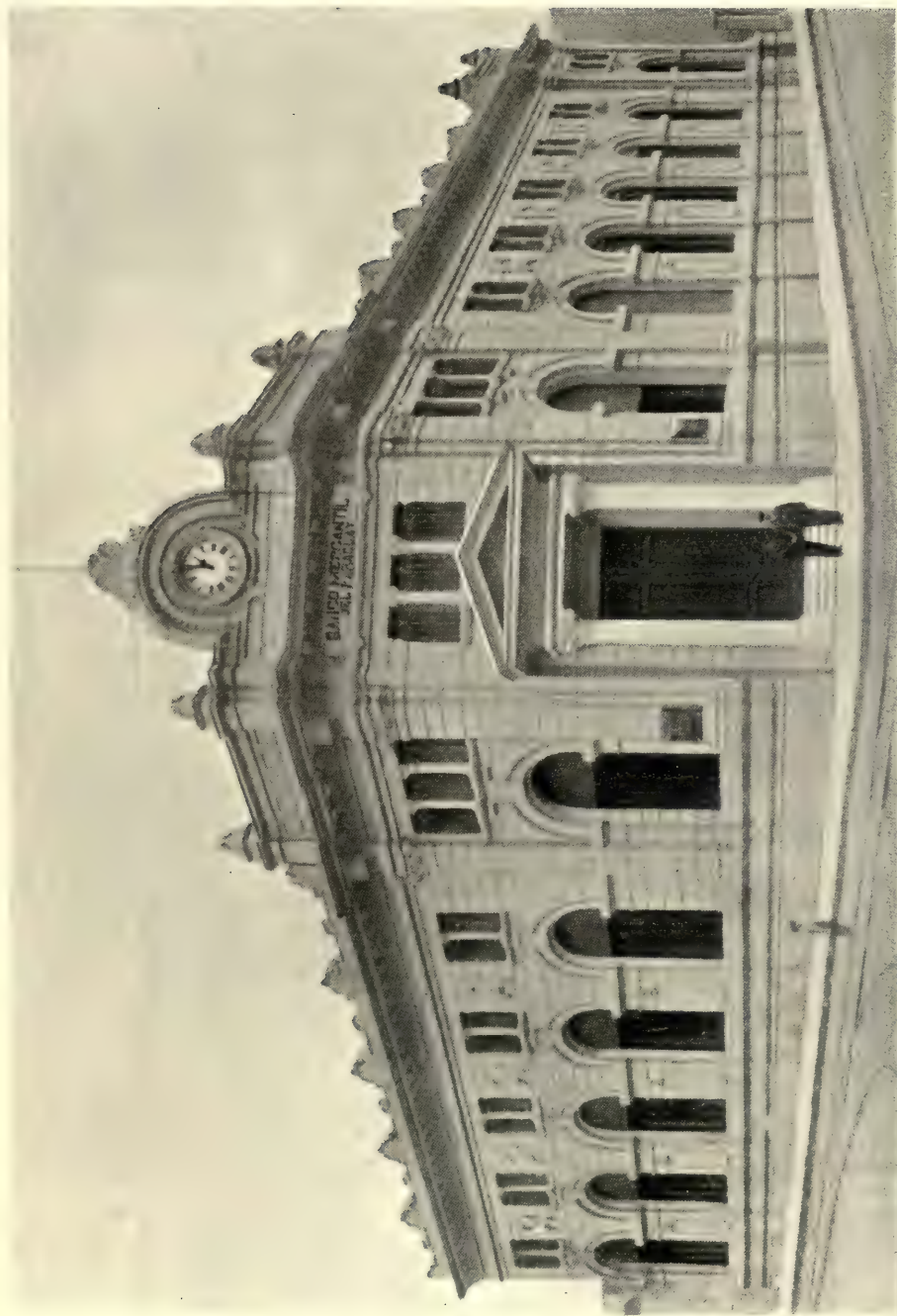
In Paraguay cattle breeding is under very much the same conditions as in the northern half of Corrientes. The herd must be kept under observation, to obviate loss from the larva of flies being deposited in open wounds. Epidemic diseases are rare, and of milder type than elsewhere—if one excepts the *mal de cadera*, which attacks the horses in some districts. In Matto Grosso mules are generally used for working on estancias; indeed, in some places they are compelled to ride oxen, as in Central Africa. If some one would only introduce the quick-trotting 'Mysore' bullocks from India—as has already been done in Jamaica—



it would be a blessing to many people in South America.

In spite of the occasional political differences in the capital, commerce is brisk. Indeed, the increased demand for the natural products of the Republic has caused a wave of prosperity to pass over the country from end to end, with results not altogether satisfactory. The peasants are neglecting their little cultivation plots, and, in working for other people, live largely on meat and biscuits. The wheat, of course, is imported from the Argentine, and the shortage in the edible varieties of maize is made up in this way. Moreover—like other ignorant people—when the money is available they have a preference, or consider it more ‘genteel,’ to use the chemically bleached wheaten flour—robbed of half its nutritive elements in the process of refining—rather than eat their own really wholesome home-grown maize meal, which is incomparably superior as a staple food. Moreover, a superfluity of money is developing habits of intoxication not very marked as yet, but I am afraid there is not much locally produced ‘cana’ left over for export in these days. These habits lead to brawls at their social meetings, and, where the knife or revolver is habitually carried by people of this class, it is not uncommon for the hot word in a dispute to be backed up by cold steel or a shot from a revolver.





BANCO MERCANTIL DEL PARAGUAY, ASUNCIÓN.



A wise Government would know how to remedy this state of affairs. Soft-heartedness and sentimentality in the administration of the laws in South American countries work out with deplorable results to all concerned. The President is decidedly not sentimental by any means, and some people who have unexpectedly been caught tripping even say that he is gifted with second sight. Therefore there is a hope that if he retains office for a long enough period he will bring the strong hand to bear in the right place, and thus set an example to other countries with more pretence to civilization.

The timber trade is in a prosperous condition, and during the last few years some enterprising people have run light lines of railway in from different parts on the river to provide cheap transport for their wood. A few have also erected mills to work up locally such logs as are unsuitable for export. These 'obrajes' provide work for quite an army of peons, and form a nucleus of settlements for further development, although progress in agricultural matters will never come to the Paraguayan until he has had practical object lessons in up-to-date farm work instilled into him by a large influx of practical foreign agriculturists. At present the hoe and machete of his father is good enough for him; while the one enterprising man in a thousand scratches up the

ground a bit with an ancient Egyptian wooden plough and covers the seed with a twist of his naked foot, a couple of hectareas is always his extreme limit of effort ; still, he is an agriculturist by instinct, and loves his work in his own stupid way. Something might be made of him with judicious treatment. Just now he is in danger of being utterly spoilt and demoralized by working for other people and acquiring all the vices of civilization rather than retaining the good qualities of his more simple forefathers. His womenfolk are, within certain limitations, clean, hardworking, and industrious ; when this is carried to the extent of bread-winning out of doors, it means neglect of the home and the refining influences that domestic life makes for. The townspeople are, of course, quite different, more or less on a parity with the Argentine, perhaps a bit quieter and more subdued, with a strong tendency to let sentiment and refinement of a certain kind run into the extremes of impracticability ; and, like a lot of other people, are sometimes proud of their vices and ashamed of their virtues. Let him who hath no sin cast the first stone. Supposing a hundred British adventurers instead of Spanish had landed on the banks of the Rio Paraguay four hundred and fifty years ago, they might not have done any better.

Indeed, the average Briton in South America



shows a decided tendency to assimilate with the people of the country. First the language is forgotten; and then the thing goes on to its logical conclusion in the way of fusion of blood and loss of nationality. If this process always meant the harmonious blending of the finer qualities of both races, it would be most satisfactory. Unfortunately, such a result is only possible under the best conditions.

Compared with the wise and far-reaching policy of the Germans in keeping alive and fostering the legitimate pride of race by means of State-aided schools, our position is most humiliating. Considering that we have approximately fifty thousand people of Anglo-Saxon parentage, with a capital of some four hundred million pounds of English money invested in River Plate countries, even upon the meanest considerations of political economics the question calls for some attention.

The South American Missionary Society, recognizing these facts, have done good work in the way of providing educational facilities for isolated groups of British subjects, linking them together by means of a common religion and the inspiration of the best ideals of their own people at home; also by establishing Normal Schools in some of the larger towns for the children of foreigners—notably in Buenos Ayres, where the original Mission, started by the Rev. W. C.

Morris, has developed into educational institutions with an attendance of over five thousand children and young people of both sexes, as well as the establishment of an institute for the teaching of trades required in the industrial development of the country. This is the kind of work likely to perpetuate that respect for the British character denoted by the local proverb 'Palabra Ingles'—the promise of an Englishman—as the last word in a business transaction, and the equivalent of 'honour bright' in our own language. One may become thoroughly cosmopolitan in character and yet realize that, until people reach a very high state of intellectual development, a localized patriotism and pride of race is essential for the preservation and transmission of our hereditary virtues.

## APPENDIX

---

As Central South America constitutes a hitherto unknown field for British and North American enterprise, the Author is giving a list of the most important commercial houses, railways, newspapers, &c., which will prove of considerable value to people desirous of doing business in that part of the world.



# THE Paraguay Central Railway

Company, Limited

(FERRO CARRIL CENTRAL DEL PARAGUAY).

---

For Time-Table and other details of Through  
Trains from Buenos Ayres to Asuncion, inquire  
at the London Offices of the Company, NEW  
BROAD STREET HOUSE, E.C., or of the General  
Manager,

FERRO CARRIL CENTRAL DEL PARAGUAY,  
ASUNCION, PARAGUAY.

---

ALL INTERESTED IN SOUTH AMERICA:  
Its People, Finances, Commerce, and Prospects,  
SHOULD READ

## The South American Journal

(Established 1863).

DIPLOMA OF HONOUR—BUENOS AYRES EXHIBITION, 1910.

THIS Weekly Paper is the recognized organ of South American business, and contains a summary of the latest news from all parts of South America, Central America, and Mexico, and fully reports proceedings of Companies connected with those countries. It indicates opportunities for trade, state of markets, &c., while very particular attention is paid to all financial matters. It has an influential circulation in England and the Continent, amongst Bankers, Merchants, Railway Contractors, Investors, &c., and also throughout Brazil and Spanish-America. The amount of English capital invested in those countries now exceeds £800,000,000.

Editorial & Publishing Offices: 309-312 Dashwood House, 9 New Broad St., E.C.

*Subscription, 25s. per annum; single copy, 6d.*

A SPECIMEN COPY SENT FREE UPON APPLICATION.



# Paraguayan Development Syndicate

CATTLE RANCHES, FARMS,  
PLANTATIONS, TIMBER FORESTS,  
AND QUEBRACHO LANDS.

*A nominal correspondence fee of half-a-crown is charged to discourage frivolous inquiries.*

People meaning business may apply to :  
ENRIQUE PLATE,  
379 BENJAMIN CONSTANT, ASUNCION.

---

## Censi & Pirotta

*Importers and  
Exporters.*

CORRESPONDENCE IN ENGLISH,  
SPANISH, ITALIAN, ETC.

CASILLA DE CORREO 413, ASUNCION.

---

## Enrique Fratta

PHOTOGRAPHIC  
EMPORIUM

ASUNCION.

TYPICAL VIEWS OF THE COUNTRY, ETC.

# Gran Hotel del Paraguay

(LIMITED LIABILITY Co.).

FRENCH COOKERY. GOOD SERVICE. NEW BUILDINGS.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR FAMILIES.

Baths and W.C. in Modern Style.

ENGLISH, DUTCH, FRENCH, AND SPANISH SPOKEN.

CASILLA DE CORREO 224, VILLA EGUSQUIZA, ASUNCION.

---

## The 'Standard'

THE OLDEST ENGLISH DAILY.

CALLE ESMERALDA 175—177,  
BUENOS AYRES.

---

## 'El Diario'

*Linotype Machines, after style of the 'New York Herald.'*

DIRECTOR:

SEÑOR RAMON CASTRO, DEPUTY IN CONGRESS.

Founded in 1904 by DON ADOLFO RIQUELME.

SPANISH DAILY NEWSPAPER, ASUNCION.

---

## 'Album Grafico' de la Republica del Paraguay

CONTRIBUTORS:

DR. CECILIO BAEZ

DR. MANUEL DOMINGUEZ

DON JUAN SILVANO GODOY

DON FULGENCIO R. MORENO

DON ENRIQUE SOLANO LOPEZ

DON JUAN E. O'LEARY

DON ARSENIO LOPEZ DECOUD, *Director-General.*

*Spanish Illustrated Work on Paraguay.*

CALLE ALBERDI 120, ASUNCION.

# ANGULO & COMPANY

## IMPORTERS.

---

Cotton Goods and Soft Goods  
in General,

---

*Wine and Provision Merchants.*

---

PALM OIL MILLS,  
SOAP FACTORY.

BUYERS AND SELLERS OF CATTLE,  
&c., &c.

---

ASUNCION DEL PARAGUAY.

# ENRIQUE PLATE

*Represents Foreign Commercial Houses. Commission Agent, etc.*

AGENT—Hamburg South America Line, The North German Lloyd,  
The Koninkly Hollandsche Lloyd Amsterdam.

EXPORTER OF ESSENCE DE 'PETIT GRAIN' (EAGLE BRAND).

References to leading firms in Europe, the United States, and the River Plate  
Republics. Correspondence in English, French, German, or Spanish.  
Registers Trade Marks.

379 CALLE BENJAMIN CONSTANT, ASUNCION.

---

## DOCTOR ROBERTO ANTONIO VELAZQUEZ SOLICITOR.

JUDICIAL MATTERS, ADMINISTRATIVE, TRANSFER OF LAND  
TITLES, Etc.

*Speaks English, French, Italian, and Spanish.*

CALLE LIBERTAD 27, ASUNCION.

---

## FEDERICO KRAUCH & Co. IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS.

MANUFACTURERS OF OIL OF PETITGRAIN

[(Trade Mark—'BOLEADOR.')]

CASILLA (BOX) DE CORREO 301, ASUNCION.

---

## THE INDUSTRIAL PARAGUAYA, LTD.

(FOUNDED IN 1888.)

*Administrative Offices and Yerba Mills in Asuncion,  
Corrientes, and Buenos Ayres.*

AUTHORIZED CAPITAL, \$5,000,000. SUBSCRIBED, \$3,464,120.

Subsidiary Enterprises—CATTLE, TIMBER, RUBBER.  
Production of 'YERBA MATE' 5,000,000 kilos per annum.

Properties—456 leagues of Yerbales. 684 leagues of Forest and Prairie.



# Banco Mercantil del Paraguay

ESTABLISHED 1890.

HEAD OFFICE - - - ASUNCION, PARAGUAY.

BRANCHES : CONCEPCION, ENCARNACION, PILAR, PARAGUARI,  
AND VILLA RICA.

Authorized Capital - - - \$25,000,000.

Paid Up - - - - - \$20,000,000.

Reserves - - - - - \$6,600,000.

General Banking Business, Drafts, Letters of Credit, and Telegraphic Transfers on the Principal Cities of Europe, North America, the Argentine Republic, and Uruguay.

Collection and Registration of Bills, Documents, etc. Current Accounts opened. Interest allowed on Savings and Deposits at call or for fixed periods.

---

## PEREZ & SANJURJO

IMPORTERS

SOFT GOODS, PERFUMERY, PROVISIONS, WINES,  
HARDWARE, Etc.

Drafts or Commissions to any part of  
Spain, Europe in general, or North  
America.

Sole Agents in the Republic for the  
well-known mark 'EL ASTRO  
COMERCIAL.'

WHOLESALE WAREHOUSES :

CALL 25 DE MAYO 182 to 186, ASUNCION ; CASILLA DE CORREO 124.

---

## BRUN & Co.

(ESTABLISHED IN 1870.)

IMPORTERS: SOFT GOODS, MERCERY, PERFUMERY,  
HATS, WINES AND PROVISIONS, Etc.

EXPORTERS OF ALL KINDS OF COUNTRY PRODUCE.

*CATTLEBREEDERS and Landholders, Etc.*

ASUNCION DEL PARAGUAY

# CRAMER & WEYER

IMPORTERS:

SOFT GOODS,  
MERCERY, ETC.

EXPORTERS:

TOBACCO,  
CIGARS, ETC.

CASILLA DE CORREO 294, ASUNCION.

---

## OTTO ZINNERT, Importer

GUNS AND HUNTING WEAPONS, NORTH AMERICAN REVOLVERS,  
WINCHESTER RIFLES, U.M.C. CARTRIDGES, ETC.

EYEGASSES AND OPTICAL INSTRUMENTS, WATCHES AND  
JEWELLERY, SEWING MACHINES, ETC.

*Sole Agent for SMITH & WESSON, and COLT'S REVOLVERS*

*Representatives in all parts of the Republic.*

CALLE PALMAS ESQ. 25 DE NOVIEMBRE, ASUNCION.

---

## LAPIERRE & Co., General Merchants

IMPORTERS: DRY GOODS, WINES, ETC.

EXPORTERS: MANUFACTURED TOBACCOS, 'LA ITAGÜENA'  
(REGISTERED TRADE MARK).

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.

*Correspondence in English, French, German, Spanish, and Dutch.*

CALLE BENJAMIN CONSTANT, ASUNCION.

---

## URRUTIA, UGARTE & Co.

IMPORTERS: COTTON GOODS, ETC. HARDWARE AND PROVISION  
MERCHANTS.

EXPORTERS: TOBACCO, HIDES, WOOL, 'YERBA,' ETC.

PRODUCERS: 'YERBA' FROM THE FIRM'S OWN YERBALES IN  
SAN ESTANISLAO.

CATTLE BREEDERS, ETC.: BREEDERS OF FINE STOCK.  
SUPPLY PURE-BRED BULLS, ETC.

*Buyers and Sellers of all kinds of Live Stock.*

# B. Meza Caballero & Co.

IMPORTERS.

*Provision and Wine Merchants  
in every Branch.*

*Hardware, &c., &c.*

---

WHOLESALE  
AND RETAIL

---

CASILLA (Box) DE CORREO 447.  
CALLE AVENIDA COLON 220 to 226.  
ASUNCION DEL PARAGUAY.

# PABLO MEILICKE

*Steam Tannery and Grindery and Leather Merchant,  
Boot, Harness, and Saddlery Factory.*

*Office and Warehouse: CALLE PALMA ESQ. AYOLAS.*

*Factory: CALLE VENEZUELA ESQ. SALINARES.*

CASILLA DE CORREO 143, ASUNCION.

---

# CHRISTIAN G. HEISECKE

*IMPORTER*

IRONMONGERY, FURNITURE, JEWELLERY, SOFT GOODS,  
PIANOS, AND HARDWARE IN GENERAL.

CASILLA (BOX) DE CORREO 406, ASUNCION.

---

# HIPOLITO SANCHEZ

*CUSTOM HOUSE AGENT.*

COMMISSIONS AND CONSIGNMENTS.

BENJAMIN CONSTANT, ESQ. AYOLAS, ASUNCION.

---

# LORENZO MANZONI

Successor MANZONI BROS. Founded in the year 1880.

*IMPORTER & GENERAL PROVISION MERCHANT.*

PERMANENT STOCK OF COAL, COKE, PORTLAND CEMENT, LIME, SALT,  
PLAIN AND BARBED WIRE, IRON ROOFING, ZINC SPOUTING, ETC.

CASILLA DE CORREO 73. Telephone 313.

CALLE MONTE VIDEO 157 TO 171, ASUNCION.



# MIGUEL G. ORTIZ

## *Wine and Provision Merchant*

OPORTO, JEREZ, CHAMPAGNE, MUM, MONTEBELLO, ETC.  
CARLON, DRY WINES, PRIORATA, RIOJA, CLARET,  
ITALIAN, FRENCH, QUINA, ALFONSO XIII., AND COGNAC.

QUININE AND IRON WINE.

GERMAN BEER.

MINERAL WATERS, ETC.

---

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.

---

CALLE 25 DE MAYO, CORNER YEGROS, ASUNCION.

---

## Sociedad Exportadora del Paraguay

*Purchasers and Exporters of  
all kinds of Farmers' Produce*

AS

SALTED AND DRIED HIDES, TOBACCO,  
HAIR, HORNS, WOOL, PALM-KERNELS, ETC.

---

SLAUGHTER-HOUSE IN COMBINATION WITH  
REFRIGERATION CHAMBERS.

PARTNERS:

BRUN & Co., GOMEZ & Co., CANELA HNOS, URRUTIA, UGARTE & Co.,  
J. CASACCIA & SON, FEDERICO KRAUCH & Co., A. CROSA & SON,  
A. GANTHER.

ASUNCION.

# SANTIAGO ROS & HNOS

*Building Materials, Etc*

BRICKS, LIME, PORTLAND CEMENT.

:: TILES, SAWN TIMBER, ETC. ::

FENCING MATERIALS, BARBED AND COMMON  
WIRE, WIRE NETTING, Etc.

ZINC ROOFING, SPOUTING. COAL AND COKE.

*BUYERS of All Kinds of COUNTRY PRODUCE*

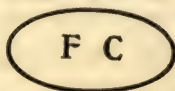
CALLE BENJAMIN CONSTANT, Corner CONVENCION,  
ASUNCION.

---

## Francisco Cattaneo

*Exporter of Tobacco.*

TRADE MARK.



CASILLA DE CORREO (Box) 112

Direccion Telefonica  
'CATTANEO'

ASUNCION

'LA INDUSTRIAL.'

# Pablo Berthomier & Co.

CALLE VILLA RICA ESQUINA COLON,  
ASUNCION.

---

STEAM MANUFACTORY.

---

MACCARONI, VERMICELLI, SPIRITS, AND  
ÆRATED CORDIALS.

GOLD MEDALS at Exhibitions in Barcelona, 1888; Paris, 1889;  
Asuncion, 1907; and Buenos Ayres, 1910.

---

## SPECIAL PRODUCTS—

PARAGUAYAN BITTERS: TONIC.

GINGER ALE: STIMULANT AND RESTORATIVE.

ICE: MANUFACTURED FROM PUREST WATER.

ANIS: FIRST QUALITY, EQUAL TO IMPORTED ARTICLE.

RECTIFIED SPIRITS, ETC.

*All Products analysed and guaranteed absolutely free from  
injurious ingredients.*

---

BUSINESS FOUNDED IN THE YEAR 1868.

# Cabrera, Benitez & Co.

*Importers and Exporters.*

GENERAL STORES  
AND  
OUTFITTERS.

**Villa Concepcion**

**Paraguay**

---

## Banco Agrícola del Paraguay

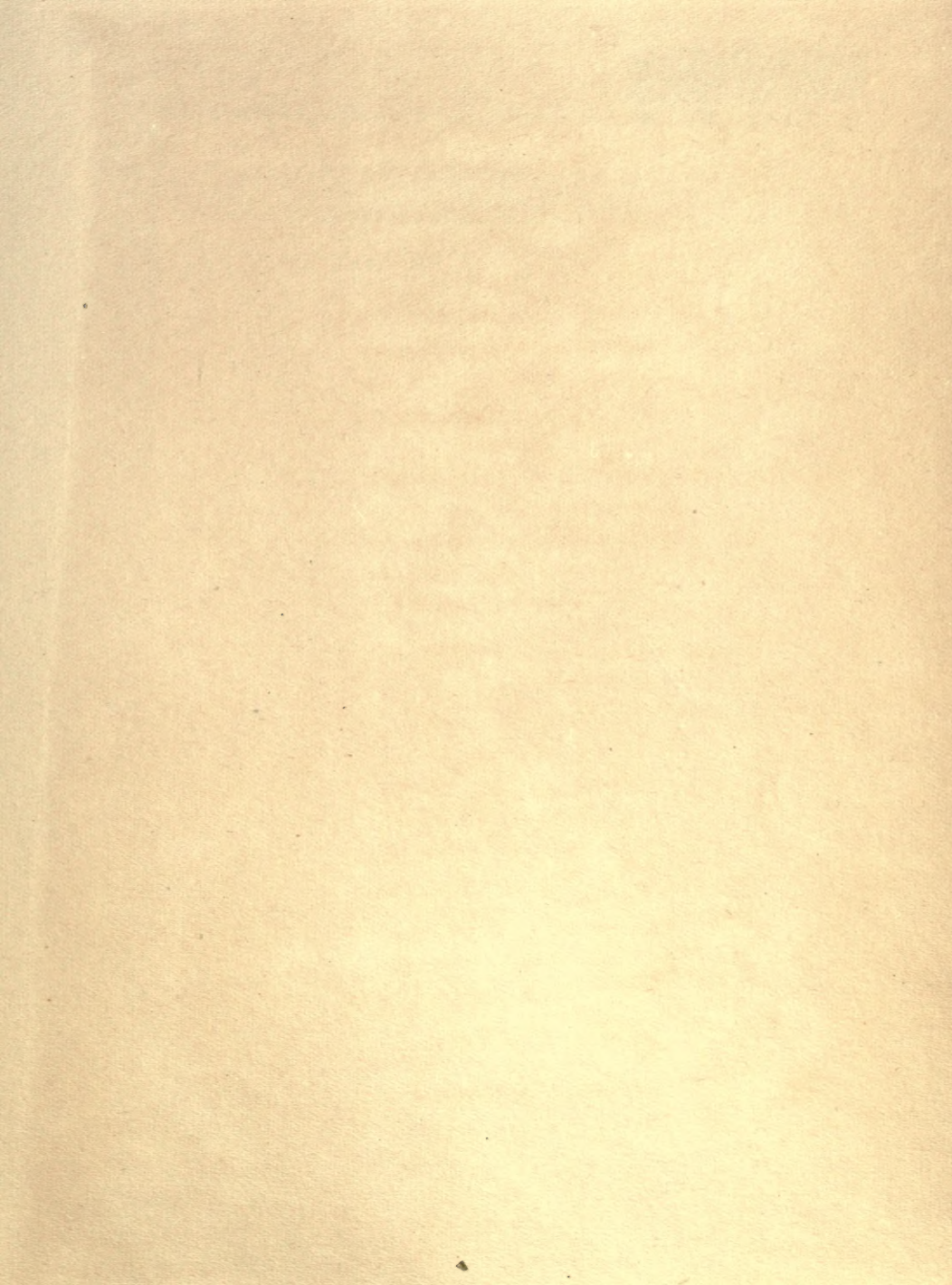
**Capital   -   -   -   -   -   \$14,531,238**

*Founded in the Year 1887.*

---

AN INSTITUTION SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES OF PARAGUAY





University of California  
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY  
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388  
Return this material to the library  
from which it was borrowed.

---

OL OCT 05 1992

REC'D LD-URL

NOV 02 1992



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**A** 000 119 620 3

